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A WANDERER IN LONDON

BY THE SAME AUTHOR

A WANDERER IN HOLLAND
FIRESIDE AND SUNSHINE
THE FRIENDLY TOWN
THE OPEN ROAD
HIGHWAYS AND BYWAYS IN SUSSEX
THE LIFE OF CHARLES LAMB
A BOOK OF VERSES FOR CHILDREN
LISTENER'S LURE



THE TOWER AND THE TOWER BRIDGE

A WANDERER IN LONDON

BY

E. V. LUCAS

WITH SIXTEEN ILLUSTRATIONS IN COLOUR BY
NELSON DAWSON
AND THIRTY-SIX OTHER ILLUSTRATIONS

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THE CITIE OF LONDON AD. 1560




T. Gracious St.
P. Leaden Hall
U. Billings gate
Q. Byshop's G?
V. Shore Dytch
R. Alde Gate
W. Spital fyeld
r. Postern G
X. Fan Church
S. Tower of LONDON
Y. St Marie Overie
Z. Wincheſter House
Bridge house
Wall
LONDON BRIDGE

A WANDERER IN LONDON

CHAPTER I

NO. 1 LONDON AND PICCADILLY

A Beginning — No. 1 London — Charing Cross in Retirement — A Walk down Piccadilly — Apsley House — The Iron Duke's statues — An old Print — Rothschild Terrace — The Motor 'Bus — The safest Place in London — Changes — The March of Utilitarianism — The Plague of New Buildings — London Architecture — The Glory of Disorder — A City of Homes — House-collecting — The Elusive Directory — Kingsley's Dictum — The House Opposite — Desirable Homes — London's Riches — The smallest House in London — Women — Clubmen — A Monument to Pretty Thoughtfulness — The Piccadilly Goat — Old Q — Rogers the Poet

LONDON, whichever way we turn, is so vast and varied, so rich in what is interesting, that to one who would wander with a plastic mind irresponsibly day after day in its streets and among its treasures there is not a little difficulty in deciding where to begin, and there is even greater difficulty in knowing where to end. Indeed, to a book on London — to a thousand books on London — there is no end.

But a beginning one can always make, whether it is appropriate or otherwise, and since I chance to live in Kensington and thus enter London by Kensington Gore and Knightsbridge, there is some fitness in beginning at

Hyde Park Corner, by that square, taciturn, grey house just to the east of it which we call Apsley House, but which I have always been told is really No. 1 London — if any No. 1 London there be.

Let us begin then at No. 1 London — just as a Frenchman bent upon discovering the English capital would begin at Charing Cross Station, or, at the moment when I write these words (early in 1906), at Cannon Street or Victoria, Charing Cross Station just now, after the fall of its roof, presenting a most unfamiliar aspect of quietude — no strangers within its gates and no cabs about its beautiful Eleanor Cross. This is the day of unexpected changes in London; but who would ever have thought to see Charing Cross closed? — Charing Cross, one of the meeting places of East and West, whose platform William the Conqueror would surely have kissed had he waited for the Channel steam-boat service.

To take a walk down Fleet Street — the cure for ennui invented by the most dogmatic of Londoners — is no longer an amusing recreation, the bustle is too great; but to take a walk down Piccadilly on a fine day remains one of the pleasures of life: another reason for beginning with No. 1 London. Piccadilly between Hyde Park corner and Devonshire House is still eminently a promenade. But only as far as Devonshire House. Once Berkeley Street is crossed and the shops begin, the saunterer is jostled; while the Green Park having vanished behind the new Ritz Hotel (which sprang up almost in a night), the sun and the freshness are lost too. But between those two ducal houses on a smiling day one may enjoy as fair a walk as in any city in the world.

No. 1 London enjoys its priority only I think in verbal tradition. To the postman such an address might mean

nothing, although the London postman has a reputation for tracking any trail, however elusive. The official address of Apsley House is, I fancy, 149 Piccadilly. Be that as it may, it is No. 1 to us, and a gloomy abode to boot, still wearing a dark frown of resentment for those broken windows, although the famous iron shutters have gone. The London rough rarely mobilises now, and when he does he breaks no windows; but those were stormier days. Opposite is the Duke himself, in bronze, on his charger, looking steadfastly for ever at his old home, where the Waterloo survivors' dinner used to be held every year, with lessening numbers and lessening, until the victor himself was called away.

An earlier equestrian statue of Wellington once dominated the triumphal arch now at the head of Constitutional Hill, but this, I know not why, was taken down and set up afresh at Aldershot. I wish it had remained, for there is no culmination to a triumphal arch so fitting as a horse and rider. A third Wellington trophy is the Achilles statue, at the back of Apsley House, in the Park, just across the roadway. This giant figure was cast from cannon taken at Salamanca and Vittoria, Toulouse and Waterloo, and was set up here by the women of England in honour of the great and invincible soldier. There is a coloured print which one may now and then see in the old shops (the last time I saw it was in the parlour of a Duke of Wellington inn at a little village in Wiltshire), of the hero of Waterloo riding beneath the Achilles on his little white horse, with his hand to the salute: one of the pleasantest pictures of the stern old man that I know, with the undulations of Hyde Park rolling away like a Surrey common in the distance.

We have no Iron Duke in these days, and Apsley House

is desolate, almost sinister. Albeit within its walls are four of Jan Steen's pictures, to say nothing of one of the finest Correggios in England and Velasquez' portrait of himself.

And so we leave No. 1 London frowning behind us, and come instantly to smiling wealth, for (unless 'bus drivers have deceived me) the little terrace of mansions between Apsley House and Hamilton Place is a stronghold of that powerful family which moved Heinrich Heine to sarcasm and Hans Christian Andersen to sentiment, and is still the greatest force in European finance; and this is a point on which 'bus drivers are not likely to be wrong, because every Christmas a brace of Rothschild pheasants become theirs, and for a week the blue and yellow racing colours of the donor are sported on all the whips on these routes.

Whips do I say? Alas, there will not long be whips on which to tie any ribbons, be they blue and yellow or black; for the doom of the omnibus horse has sounded, blown in unmistakable notes upon the motor horn, and already the monstrous Vanguards and Arrows are upon the town, every day in increasing numbers. The crossings of London were never anything but a peril, especially at the very point at which we are now standing, waiting to get across Hamilton Place (where the converging lines of traffic — east from Knightsbridge, west from Piccadilly, south from Park Lane, and north from Grosvenor Place — reduce the rule of the road to chaos); but they are daily becoming more and more difficult and dangerous as chauffeur is added to chauffeur, and one's nerves snap beneath the shattering racket of their engines.

It was John Bright, I think, who said that the safest place in the world was the centre compartment of an express train. One might adapt this remark and say that



A DUTCH LADY

AFTER THE PICTURE BY FRANS VAN MIEREVELT IN THE WALLACE COLLECTION

the safest place in London will soon be the inside of a motor omnibus, for these vehicles are so massive that they would of necessity come out victorious in any collision with anything but each other, while if you are riding in one you cannot well be run over.

But petrol in place of the patient and friendly horse is only a minor matter. Never in the recent history of London have so many changes come so rapidly as in the year or two preceding 1906: to which belong not only this rise of the motor but the elimination of hundreds of landmarks and the sweeping away of whole streets drenched with human associations. Such is the ruthless march of utilitarianism and luxury (some of the most conspicuous new buildings being expensive hotels) that one has come to entertain the uneasy feeling that nothing is safe. Certainly nothing is sacred. A garage being required for the motor cars of the Stock Exchange, what, one asks oneself, is there to prevent the demolition of the Charterhouse? Since Christ's Hospital could be moved bodily to Sussex in order that more offices might rise in Newgate Street, why should not the Brothers be sent to Bournemouth? The demand for another vast caravanserai for American visitors on the banks of the Thames may become acute any day: why should not the Temple site be utilised? One lives in fear.

I never look at the Adelphi Terrace without a misgiving that when next I pass it will have vanished. Nothing but its comparative distance from the main stream of commerce can have saved Gray's Inn. There is an architect round the corner ready with a florid terra-cotta tombstone for every beautiful, quiet, old-world building in London. Bedford Row is undoubtedly doomed: Queen Anne's Gate trembles: Barton Street knows no repose. Even Earl's Terrace and Edwardes Square, in remote

Kensington, have but a few years to live. He who would see London before London becomes unrecognisable must hasten his steps. The modern spirit can forgive everything except age.

The modern London architect dislikes large, restful, unworried spaces and long unbroken lines: hence many of our new buildings have been for the most part fussy and ornamental — and not at all, I think, representative of the national character. Somerset House (save for its fiddling little cupola) is perhaps London architecture at its simplest; the Law Courts, with all their amazing intricacy and elaboration, London's public architecture at its most complex and unsuitable. One of the most satisfying buildings in London is the Adelphi Terrace; one of the most charming the little row of dependencies to the north of Kensington Palace. St. James's Palace is beautiful, but Buckingham Palace could hardly be more commonplace. Nothing can save it but a coat of white paint every spring, and this it never gets.

To Somerset House, the Adelphi, St. James's Palace and the Tower Bridge, different though they are, the epithet English can be confidently applied; but Buckingham Palace is French, and it would be difficult to use the word English of many of the great structures now rising in London. We seem to have no national school of urban architecture any longer, no steady ideals. The new London that is emerging so rapidly lacks any governing principle. The Ritz Hotel, for example, is Parisian, the new Savoy is German, the Carlton and His Majesty's Theatre are Parisian.

But if London's completed new buildings are not satisfactory, their preparations are. There is nothing out of Méryon's etchings more impressive than our contractors'

giant cranes can be — fixed high above the houses on their scaffolding, with sixty vertical yards of chain hanging from their great arms. Against an evening sky, with a little smoke from the engine purpling in the dying sun's rays, and the mist beginning to blur or submerge the surrounding houses, these cranes and scaffoldings have an effect of curious unreality, a hint even of Babylon or Nineveh, a suggestion at any rate of all majestic building and builders in history. London has no more interesting or picturesque sight than this.

Among the best public buildings of recent days are the National Portrait Gallery, seen as one walks down the Charing Cross Road, and the Institute of Painters in Water Colours in Piccadilly, and the Record Office in Chancery Lane. The South Kensington School of Science is good, so square and solid and grave is it, albeit perhaps a little too foreign with its long and (in London) quite useless but superbly decorative and beautiful loggia; but what can we say of the Imperial Institute and the Natural History Museum close by, except that they are ambitious and symmetrical — the ideal of the Kindergarten box of bricks carried out to its highest power?

It is as though London had been to a feast of architecture and stolen the scraps. She has everything. She has Queen Anne's Mansions, that hideous barracks, and she has Standen's in Jermyn Street, which is a Florentine palazzo; she has St. John's, Westminster, with its four unsightly bell-towers, and St. Dunstan's-in-the-East with its indescribably graceful spire; she has Charing's Eleanor Cross and the Albert Memorial; she has Westminster Hall and the new Roman Catholic Cathedral; she has Cannon Street Station and the Heralds' College; she has the terra cotta Prudential Office in Holborn and within a few yards

of it the medieval façade of Staple Inn; she has Euston Station and the new Ecclesiastical Commissioners' offices at Westminster; she has Park Lane and Bedford Row; she has the Astor Estate Office and Frascati's; she has Chelsea Hospital and Whitehall Court; she has the Gaiety Theatre and Spence's in St. Paul's Churchyard with its plain stone gables; she has the white severity of the Athenæum Club and Waring's new premises in Oxford Street, a gay enough building, but one that requires the spectator to be a hundred yards away — which he cannot be.

London has learnt nothing from Philadelphia or Paris of the value of regularity, and if she can help it she never will. I suppose that Regent Street and Park Crescent were her last efforts on a large scale to get unity into herself, and now she is allowing the Regent Street curve to be broken by the new Piccadilly Hotel. But since the glory of London is her disorder, it does not matter. Nothing will change that.

The narrowness and awkwardness of London streets are a perpetual reminder of the Englishman's incapacity or unwillingness to look ahead. In no other city in the world would it have been permitted to build two theatres and the Coliseum in a street so narrow as St. Martin's Lane, as happened only the other day. Nowhere else is traffic allowed to be so continuously and expensively congested at the whim of private companies. In the city itself, in the busy lanes off Cheapside for instance, where waggons are sometimes kept eight hours before they can be extricated, this narrowness means the daily loss of thousands of pounds. London's chance to become a civilised city was probably lost for ever at Waterloo. Had Wellington been defeated, carriages might now be running four abreast down Fleet Street. Yet as neither Napoleon nor Baron Hauss-

man ever came our way, we must act accordingly; and the railway companies are still building on their branch lines arches wide enough to carry only a single pair of rails.

But in spite of architectural whimsies, there are in no other city of the world so many houses in which one would like to live as in London. In spite of our studious efforts to arrange that every room shall have one or more draughts in it: in spite of our hostility to hot water pipes and our affection for dark and dreary basements; it is generally agreed that the English house can come nearer to the idea of home than that of any other people, and there can be no doubt that the English home is to be found in its perfection in London. Even as I write the memory of friendly houses, modern and Georgian and of even earlier date, in various parts of England, rises before me: houses over which the spirit of welcome broods, and within which are abundant fires, and lavender-scented sheets, and radiant almost laughing cleanliness, and that sense of quiet efficient order that is perhaps not the least charming characteristic of an English country house. Yet it is without treachery to these homes that one commends the comfortable London house as the most attractive habitation in the world; for a house, I take it, should be in the midst of men, and in spite of so many blemishes which no one feels so much as the mistress of a country house — and the greatest of which is dirt — the London home is the homeliest of all. Perhaps a touch of grime is not unnecessary. Perhaps houses can be too clean for the truest human dailiness.

While walking about London I have noticed so many houses in which I could live happily; and indeed to look for these is not a bad device to make walking in London tolerable — to take the place of the thousand and one distractions and allurements of the walk in the country. One

becomes a house-collector: marking down those houses which possibly by some unexpected turn of Fortune's wheel one might take, or which one wants to enter on friendly terms, or which one ought once to have lived in when needs were simpler.

Holland House is, of course, too splendid: one could never live there; but there is, for example, at 16, South Audley Street, a corner house where one would be quite happy, with double windows very prettily placed and paned, and a front door with glass panels quite as if it were in the country and within its own grounds, through which may be seen the hall and a few paintings and some old black oak. I expect that Mr. Beit's house in Park Lane is fairly comfortable, although that also is too large; and the low white house standing back in Curzon Street is probably too ambitious too; but there is a house at the corner of Cheyne Walk and Beaufort Street, in whose top windows over-looking the grey and pearl river one could be very serene. Other Cheyne Walk houses are very appealing too: No. 15, with a sundial, and No. 6, square and grave, and No. 2, with its little loggia, and Old Swan House, that riparian palace. If however I was to overlook the Thames I think I would choose one of the venerable residences on the walls of the Tower, from which one could observe not only the river but, at only one remove, the sea itself.

I have sometimes amused myself by jotting down the addresses of the houses I have liked, intending to find out who lived in them; but the *London Directory* seems to be hopelessly beyond the reach of anyone not in an office or a public-house. But I do happen to know who it is that owns some of the most desirable houses in my bag. I know, for example, the pretty white and green house where the author of *Peter Pan* lives; I know that the little low



THE PARABLE OF THE UNMERCIFUL SERVANT

AFTER THE PICTURE BY REMBRANDT IN THE WALLACE COLLECTION

house facing St. James's Park by Queen Anne's Gate belongs to Sir James Knowles; and there is a beautiful white house on the south side of Hyde Park, in Kensington Gore, — an old house within its own gates, with a garden behind it, which I have discovered to belong to a certain Lord; but everyone that I know seems to want that.

If ever I were found in these houses it would not be for theft, but to see if their Chippendale was really worthy of them, and how blue their china was, and if they had any good pictures. Perhaps many a burglar has begun purely as an amateur in furniture and decoration.

I rather think it is Charles Kingsley who says, in one of the grown-up digressions in *Water Babies*, that the beauty of the house opposite is of more consequence than that of the house one lives in: because one rarely sees the house one is in, but is always conscious of the other. Kingsley (if it was Kingsley) was good at that kind of hard practical remark; but I fancy that this one means nothing, because the kind of person who would like to live in an ugly house would not care whether the house opposite was beautiful or not. I, who always want too much, would choose above all things to live in a beautiful house with no house opposite; yet since that is hardly likely to be, I would choose to live in a beautiful house with long white blinds that shut out the house opposite (beautiful or ugly) and yet did not exclude what it amuses us in London to call light.

Not that the house opposite would really bother me very much. In fact, the usual charge that is brought against it in this city — that it encourages organ-grinders — is to my mind a virtue. London without organ-grinders would not be London; and one likes a city to be true to its character, good or bad. Also there is hardly any

tune except our National Anthem of which I can honestly say I am tired; and as often as one comes to the conclusion that one can endure even that no longer, it justifies itself and recovers its popularity by bringing some tiresome evening to an end.

In naming desirable houses I am thinking chiefly of the houses with individual charm: old houses, for the most part, which have been made modern in their accessories by their owners, but which retain externally their ancient gravity or beauty — such as you see in Queen Anne's Gate, or the Master of the Temple's house, or Aubrey House on Campden Hill. I am thinking chiefly of these old comely houses, and of the very few new houses by architects of taste, such as Mr. Astor's exquisite offices on the Embankment — one of the most satisfying of London's recent edifices, with thought and care and patience and beauty in every inch of it, whether in the stone or the wood or the iron: possessing indeed not a little of the thoroughness and single-mindedness that Ruskin looked for in the cathedrals of France.

But a few desirable houses of the middle or early-nineteenth century one has marked approvingly too — such as Thackeray's house in Kensington Palace Gardens, that discreet and almost private avenue of vast mansions, each large enough and imposing enough to stand in its own park in the country: but here packed close together — not quite in the Park Lane huddle, but very nearly so — and therefore conveying only an impaired impression of their true amplitude. (It is of course the houses of a city that give one the most rapid impression of its prosperity or poverty. To walk in the richer residential quarters of London — in Mayfair and Belgravia, South Kensington and Bayswater and Regent's Park, is to receive an over-

whelming proof of the gigantic wealth of this people. Take Queen's Gate alone: the houses in it mount to the skies and every one represents an income of five figures. The only one of them, however, that I covet is at the corner of Imperial Institute Road — a modern Queen Anne mansion of the best type.)

Thackeray's old house in Young Street spreads its bow windows even more alluringly than the new one; but there is a little house next to that, hiding shyly behind evergreens, where I am sure I could be comfortable. This house — it is only a cottage, really — has one of London's few wet, bird-haunted lawns. It is so retiring and whispering that the speculative builder has utterly overlooked it all these years. Another retiring house that I should like to have is that barred and deserted house in Upper Cheyne Row, Chelsea, and I could be happy in Swan Walk, Chelsea, too, and at No. 14 or 15 Great College Street, Westminster.

Of the exceedingly little houses which one could really inhabit there are several on Campden Hill. There is one in Aubrey Walk which once I could have been very happy in: I am afraid it is too small now. It could be moved bodily one night anywhere: a wheelbarrow would be enough — a wheelbarrow and a pair of strong arms. It is so small and compact that it might be transferred to the stage of *Peter Pan* as a present for Wendy. I go that way continually just to look at it. And there is the White House with a verandah at Kensington Gate which has been built round by new mansions so as to be almost invisible; and, best of all perhaps — certainly so in spring — there is the secluded keeper's lodge in Kensington Gardens overlooking the Serpentine.

The most outrageously unreal new miniature house in

London is not on the outskirts at all but in the city itself — in Fetter Lane in fact. I mean the lodge in the garden of the Record Office. This little architectural whimsy might be the abode of an urban fairy or gnome, some minute relation of Gog or Magog, or even a cousin of the Griffin at Temple Bar. It is charming enough to have such a tenant; and whoever lives there believes nobly in heat, for the chimney is immense. And the quaintest of the old miniature London houses is that residence for the sexton which is built against the wall of St. Bartholomew the Great in Smithfield — a very Elizabethan doll's house.

But this architectural digression has taken us far from Piccadilly and the crossing at Hamilton Place where we were standing when my pen ran away. After Hamilton Place the clubs begin, one of the first being the largest of those for women of which London now has so many, with their smoking rooms all complete. One would like to hear the Iron Duke on this development of modern life. "Smoke and be——" would he say?

To me a more interesting structure than any Piccadilly club, whether it be for men or women, is the curious raised platform on the Green Park side of the road at this point, which was set there by a kindly observer some years ago, who noticed that porters walking west with parcels were a good deal distressed after the hill, and so provided them with a resting place for their burdens while they recovered breath. The time has gone by for its use, no one in these parts now bearing anything on the shoulder, omnibuses being so many and so cheap: but the platform remains as a monument to pretty thoughtfulness.

When I first came to London, Piccadilly still had its goat. I remember meeting it on the pavement one day in 1902, opposite Hamilton Terrace, and wondering how it

got there, and why the people, usually so curious about the unusual, were taking so little notice of such a phenomenon, as it seemed to me. It must have been soon after that it died and, with true London carelessness, was not replaced. London never replaces anything.

Were it not for the traffic — omnibuses and cabs all day and until long after midnight, and in the small hours traction engines rumbling into Covent Garden with waggon loads of cabbages and vegetables from the Thames valley — Piccadilly opposite the Green Park would be the perfect place for a house. But it is too noisy. None the less residences there are, between the clubs, many of them either having interesting associations of their own, or standing upon historic sites: such as Gloucester House, at the east corner of Hamilton Place, where the Elgin marbles, which are now in the British Museum, first dwelt after their ravishment from the Acropolis; and Nos. 138 and 139, next it, which stand upon the site of the abode of the disreputable "Old Q" who posed to three generations as the model debauchee, and by dint of receiving 9,340 visits of two hours each from his doctor during the last seven years of his life, and a bath of milk every morning, contrived to keep alive and in fairly good condition until he was eighty-six. It was in the half of Old Q's house which afterwards was called No. 139, and was pulled down in 1839 and rebuilt, that Byron was living in 1816 when his wife left him for ever, for reasons which a very limited portion of the world has recently been favoured with by the Earl of Lovelace. Lord Palmerston for some years occupied what is now the Naval and Military (or "In and Out") club; and Miss Mellon the actress, who married Mr. Coutts the banker, lived at No. 1 Stratton Street, which has long been the residence of the Baroness Burdett-

Coutts. For the rest, I give way to the communicative and perhaps imaginative 'bus driver, who in his turn is giving way to the chauffeur, who cannot tell anyone anything, partly because he is the man at the wheel, and partly because he is not within speaking distance of any of his fares, and partly because he is an engineer and a modern, and therefore not interested in the interesting. The iron law of utilitarianism which called him into being is the foe of so many of the little amenities of life.

And so, passing Devonshire House's rampart, we come to Berkeley Street, and the strolling part of the walk is over. Anyone who is run over at this corner — and that is no difficult matter — will have the satisfaction of knowing that he shares his fate with the author of *The Pleasures of Memory*. Being only a little past eighty at the time, Rogers survived the shock many years.

This reminds me that the infrequency with which Londoners are run over is one of the most amazing things in this city. To ride in a hansom or a motor car in any busy street, is, after a short time, to be convinced that the vehicle has some such power of attraction over human beings as a magnet has over needles. Men rise up from nowhere apparently with no other purpose but to court death, and yet all seem to view the advancing danger with something of the same air of astonishment as they would be entitled to assume were they to meet a railway train in Kensington Gardens. It seems to be a perpetual surprise to the Londoner that horses and carriages are making any use of his roadways.



PICCADILLY LOOKING WEST

CHAPTER II

ROMANCE AND THE WALLACE PICTURES

Dull Streets — London and London — The Rebuilder again — Old Paris — The Heart of the Matter — A Haunt of Men — External Romance — Dickens and Stevenson — The True Wandering Knight — Cab Drivers — The Magic Twopence — A Word to the Fair — The Beautiful Serpentine — London Fogs — Whistler — The Look-out down the River — Park Lane — Tyburn — Famous Malefactors — The Fortunate John Smith — The Wallace Collection — Rembrandt and Velasquez — Andrea del Sarto — Heresies about the Fête Champêtre School — Our Dutch Masters — Metsu's Favourite Sitter — Guardi and Bonington — Miniatures and Sèvres

THE more I wander about London the less wanderable in, for a stranger, does it seem to be. We who live in it and necessarily must pass through one street in order to get to another are not troubled by squalor and monotony; but what can the traveller make of it who comes to London bent upon seeing interesting things? What can he make of the wealthy deserts of Bayswater? of the grimy Vauxhall Bridge Road? of the respectable aridity of the Cromwell Road, which goes on for ever? of the grey monotony of Gower Street? What can he make of the hundreds of square miles of the East End? And what, most of all, of the interminable districts of small houses which his train will bisect on every line by which he can re-enter London after one of his excursions to the country? Nothing. He will not try twice.

And yet these poorer districts are London in the fullest sense of the word, although for the most part when we say London we mean the Strand and Piccadilly. But the Strand and Piccadilly might go and it would not really matter: few persons would suffer extremely; whereas were Poplar or Bermondsey, Kentish Town or Homerton, to fall in ruins or be burnt, thousands and thousands of Londoners would have lost all and be utterly destitute.

It perhaps comes to this, that there is no one London at all. London is a country containing many towns, of which a little central area of theatres and music halls, restaurants and shops, historic buildings and hotels, is the capital; and it is this capital that strangers come to see. For the most part it is this capital with which the present pages are concerned. London for our purposes dwindles down to a very small area where most of her visitors spend all their time — the Embankment, Trafalgar Square, and Piccadilly, Regent Street and the British Museum, the Strand and Ludgate Hill, the Bank and the Tower. That is London to the ordinary inquisitive traveller. Almost everything that English provincials, Americans and other foreigners come to London to see, is there.

It is not as if leaving the beaten paths were likely to lead to the discovery of any profusion of curious or picturesque corners. A few years ago this might have been so, but as I have said, a tidal wave of utilitarianism has lately rolled over the city and done irreparable mischief. London no longer offers much harvest for the gleaner of odds and ends of old architecture, quaint gateways, unexpected gables. Such treasures as she still retains in the teeth of the rebuilder are well known: such as Staple Inn and the York Water Gate, Melhuish's shop in Fetter Lane, a house or two in Chelsea (mostly doomed), the city churches, a corner

or two near Smithfield, and so forth. She has nothing, for example, comparable with the Faubourg St. Antoine in Paris, where one may be rewarded every minute by some beautiful relic of the past; and where suddenly last year I came, in the Rue Montorgeuil, on a stable yard, all darkness and sombre mystery, beneath a gable of gigantic beams, all ready for Rembrandt to set the Holy Family in its midst, or for Méryon to make terrible with a few strokes of his sinister needle. I have had no such fortune here. London, one would say, should be first among cities where symbols of the past are held sacred; but in reality it is the last.

Hence I am only too conscious as we walk up Park Lane (having returned to No. 1 London to begin again), that we shall be wandering in streets that present little or no attraction to the stranger from the shires or the pilgrim from over seas. For beyond some mildly interesting architecture Mayfair streets can offer nothing to anyone that is not interested in their past inhabitants. Better to have stuck to Piccadilly or Oxford Street, with their busy pavements: much better, perhaps, and at the same time to have accepted the fact that London is before all things a city of living men and women.

That is what the traveller must come to see — London's men and women, her millions of men and women. If he would eat, drink and be merry, he must go elsewhere; if he would move in beautiful and spacious thoroughfares, he must go elsewhere; if he would see crumbling architecture or stately palaces, he must go elsewhere; but if he has any interest in the human hive, this is the place. He can study it here day and night for a year, and there will still be vast tracts unknown to him.

For a great city of great age and a history of extraordin-

ary picturesqueness and importance, London is nearly destitute of the external properties of romance. But although, except here and there — and those in the more placid and law-abiding quarters, such as the Inns of Court — the dark gateway and the medieval gable are no more, I suppose that no city has so appealed to the imagination of the romantic novelist. The very contrast between the dull prosaic exterior of a London street and the passions that may be at work within is part of the allurement.

It was undoubtedly Dickens who first introduced Englishmen to London as a capital of mystery and fun, tragedy and eccentricity: it was Dickens who discovered London's melodramatic wealth. But Dickens did not invent anything. It was Stevenson in his *New Arabian Nights* who may be said to have invented the romantic possibilities of new streets. Dickens needed an odd corner before he set an odd figure in it; the Wilderness, for instance, came before Quilp, the Barbican before Sim Tappertit; but Stevenson, by simply transferring the Baghdad formula to London, in an instant transformed, say, Campden Hill and Hampstead, even Bedford Park and Sydenham Hill, into regions of daring and delightful possibilities. After reading the *New Arabian Nights* the tamest residence holds potentialities; and not a tobacconist but may be a prince in disguise, not a hansom cabman but may bear a roving commission to inveigle you to an adventure.

In ordinary life to-day, even in London among her millions, adventures are, I must admit, singularly few, and such as occur mostly follow rather familiar lines; but since the *New Arabian Nights* there has always been hope, and that is not a little in this world.

Even without Stevenson I should, I trust, have realised something of the London hansom driver's romantic quality.



THE LADY WITH A FAN

AFTER THE PICTURE BY VELASQUEZ IN THE WALLACE COLLECTION

He is the true Wandering Knight of this city. He does not in the old way exactly hang the reins over his horse's neck, but he is as vacant of personal impulse as if he did. His promptings come all from without — not from the horse, but from the fare. There he sits, careless, motionless (save for quick eyes), apathetic. He may sit thus for an hour, for two, for three, unnoticed; he may be hailed the next moment. A distant whistle, an umbrella raised a hundred yards away, and he is transformed into life. He may be wanted to drive only to a near station — or to a distant suburb. One minute he has no purpose in his brain: the next he is informed by one and one only — to get to St. Pancras or Notting Hill, the theatre or the Bank, the Houses of Parliament or Scotland Yard, in the shortest space of time. And this romantic is the servant of everyone who has a shilling — bishop or coiner, actress or M.P.

So, it may be said, is the cab driver of Paris and Berlin, of New York and Glasgow. But these have not the hansom. It is the hansom that makes the romance: the odd shape of it, the height of the driver above the crowd, the deft celerity of it, together with that dashing adventurous air which so many hansom drivers possess and no driver of a four-wheeler ever aspired to. Good hansom drivers when they die go I know not where; but bad ones undoubtedly are condemned to the box seats of four-wheelers.

Disraeli's picturesque simile of the hansom — the gondola of London — is now I fear obsolete; for the true gondola of London is the electric brougham, which steals past in the night, so black and silent and secret, on its muffled wheels. On a wet night, when the asphalt streams gold, only a mandolin is needed to complete the illusion.

In my experience cabmen are not only the true romantics but are also the pleasantest of London's public servants. Now and then one meets a pessimist or a capitalist, but for the most part they are genial and honest: considering the uncomfortable and even dangerous conditions of their exposed life, in London weather, nobly so. The only complaint I have against them is that they have ceased to know the way. Very rarely does a cabman now take the shortest or best route, and once, I fancy, they always did. Against their loyal little horses I have no complaint whatever, the brave little creatures, so much of whose dull life is waiting, waiting. The trot of the London cabhorse is said to be the shortest sharpest trot in the world — an adaptation of its natural movement to our slippery pavements. My experience is that after the first five minutes all cabhorses are equally good, although some certainly start badly.

The secret of successful dealing with cabmen was whispered to me years ago by a wise man, and I have never had trouble since. "In addition to the legal fare," said he, "give them twopence. It is not enough to corrupt them or make them harshly exorbitant with others; it is so small that you will not feel it; it shows the cabman that you wish him well, while it may, if you like, flatter you into a good opinion of yourself as a man who has generous impulses. If you give a cabman sixpence above his fare he knows you to be a fool and will probably demand a shilling; if you give him his just fare and twopence extra he recognises a gentleman."

I commend the policy to others, especially to women, who seem to have a special gift for bringing out the worst side of the cabman's character. Lacking any instinctive knowledge of distance, and being compelled by circumstances very often actually to exercise that economy of

which their husbands only talk, they are peculiarly at a disadvantage when they alight from a cab. In Paris the taximeter comes to their rescue; but the taximeter is far too sensible a device for London, and so the agony of payment must be endured, with the cabman's eyes watching from above as a hovering hawk watches a shrew mouse. I believe that the twopenny bonus would save the situation, for the cabman would at least know that something was intended, and that may be all he wants to know. His resentment is often directed less against the smallness of the fare than the meanness (as he thinks it) at the back of it.

The cabman has still another claim upon one's gratitude when all has been said for his romantic calling and his signal usefulness in driving one hither and thither. After half-past twelve, the hour at which the law decrees that no ordinary Londoner shall be fed in any licensed house except a club, the cabman can become a friend indeed. Some of the best bacon and eggs and hot tea that ever I tasted have been placed before me in a Cabmen's Shelter at three in the morning. One meal in particular I remember — in Pont Street, last summer. As we ate at the little narrow table (sardines first, and then bacon and eggs) I enlarged to the cabman on the merits of the taximeter system in Paris, while the light grew stronger and stronger without, and the sparrows chirped on the roof. But unless one goes in with a cabman, as his friend, these shelters are barred and there is only the coffee stall. There, however, the hard-boiled eggs are always good, whatever the company or weather may be.

But this talk of cabmen has taken us far from romance, and I want to say one other word about romantic London before we really enter Park Lane. Beneath one of her mists or light fogs London can become the most mysterious

and beautiful city in the world. I know of nothing more bewitchingly lovely than the Serpentine on a still misty evening — when it is an unruffled lake of dim pearl-grey liquid, such stuff as sleep is made of. St. James's Park at dusk on a winter's afternoon, seen from the suspension bridge, with all the lights of the Government offices reflected in its water, has less mystery but more romance. It might be the lake before an enchanted castle. And while speaking of evening effects I must not forget the steam which escapes in fairy clouds from the huge chimney off Davies Street, just behind the Bond Street Tube Station. On the evening of a clear day this vapour can be the most exquisite violet and purple, transfiguring Oxford Street. To artists the fog is London's best friend. Not the black fog, but the other. For there are two distinct London fogs — the fog that chokes and blinds, and the fog that shrouds. The fog that enters into every corner of the house and coats all the metal work with a dark slime, and sets us coughing and rubbing our eyes — for that there is nothing to say. It brings with it too much dirt, too much unhealthiness, for any kind of welcome to be possible. "Hell is a city very much like London" I quoted to myself in the last of such fogs, as I groped by the railings of the Park in the Bayswater Road. The traffic, which I could not see, was rumbling past, and every now and then a man, close by but invisible, would call out a word of warning, or someone would ask in startled tones where he was. The hellishness of it consisted in being of life and yet not in it — a stranger in a muffled land. It is bad enough for ordinary wayfarers in such a fog as that; but one has only to imagine what it is to be in charge of a horse and cart, to see how much worse one's lot might be.

But the other fog — the fog that veils but does not



SAN GIORGIO MAGGIORE, VENICE

AFTER THE PICTURE BY GUARDI IN THE WALLACE COLLECTION

obliterate, the fog that softens but does not soil, the fog whose beautifying properties Whistler may be said to have discovered — that can be a delight and a joy. Seen through this gentle mist London becomes a city of romance. All that is ugly and hard in her architecture, all that is dingy and repellent in her colour, disappears. "Poor buildings," wrote Whistler, who watched their transformation so often from his Chelsea home, "lose themselves in the dim sky, and the tall chimneys become *campanili*, and the warehouses are palaces in the night, and the whole city hangs in the heavens."

I have said that it was Dickens who discovered the London of eccentricity, London as the abode of the odd and the quaint, and Stevenson who discovered London as a home of romance. It was Whistler who discovered London as a city of fugitive, mysterious beauty. For decades the London fog had been a theme for vituperation and sarcasm: it needed this sensitive American-Parisian to show us that what to the commonplace man was a foe and a matter for rage, to the artist was a friend. Everyone knows about it now.

Fogs have never been quite the same to me since I was shown a huge chimney on the south side of the Thames, and was told that it belonged to the furnaces that supply London offices with electric light; and that whenever the weather seems to suggest a fog, a man is sent to the top of this chimney to look down the river and give notice of the first signs of the enemy rolling up. Then, as his news is communicated, the furnaces are re-stoked, and extra pressure is obtained that the coming darkness may be fought and the work of counting-houses not interrupted. All sentinels, all men on the look-out, belong to romance; and from his great height this man peering over the river

shipping and the myriad roofs for a thickening of the horizon has touched even a black London fog with romance for me. I think of his straining eyes, his call of warning, those roaring fires. . . .

Park Lane is the Mecca of the successful financier. A house in Park Lane is a London audience's symbol for ostentatious wealth, just as supper with an actress is its symbol for gilt-edged depravity; yet it is just as possible to live in Park Lane without being either a plutocrat or a vulgarian, as it is to be dull and virtuous in the few minutes after the play that are allowed for supper at a restaurant before the light is switched off — to plunge his guests in darkness being the London restaurateur's tactful reminder that closing time has arrived.

Park Lane is interesting in that every house in it has some personal character; while a few are beautiful. Of Mr. Beit's I have already spoken. It might have been built to stand among trees in its own deer park: a remark that applies with even more propriety to Dorchester House (now the home of the American Embassy), and to Londonderry House, and to Grosvenor House, all of which are treasuries of Old Masters, and all of which quietly take their place in this street almost as submissively as the component parts of a suburban terrace. Such natural meetings of architectural incompatibles is one of London's most curious characteristics. There are, I believe, in Park Lane no two houses alike; but now and then one comes upon one more unlike the others than one would have thought possible — as for example that richly carved stone façade at the end of Tilney Street, a gem in its way, but very, very unexpected here.

Before it was Park Lane and wealthy this pleasant thoroughfare — half-town and half-country, catching all

the sun that London can offer in summer and winter — was known as Tyburn Lane, Tyburn Tree, where highwaymen and other malefactors danced upon air, being at the north end of it, where Connaught Place now stands: Oxford Street in those days being Tyburn Street, and much of Bayswater Tyburnia. The last hanging at Tyburn was in 1783, after which the scene was moved to the front of Newgate (now also no more). We have the grace to do such deeds in secret to-day; but nothing in our social history is more astonishing than the deliberateness with which such grace came upon us.

Tyburn was the end of a few brave fellows, and many others. Perkin Warbeck, who claimed the throne, died here, and Fenton, who killed Buckingham; Jack Sheppard very properly had a crowd numbering 200,000, but Jonathan Wild, who picked the parson's pocket on the way to the gallows, had more; Mrs. Brownrigg's hanging was very popular, but among the masses through whom Sixteen-stringed Jack wended his way, with a bouquet from a lady friend in his hand, were probably more sympathisers than censors. The notorious Dr. Dodd, in 1777, also drew an immense concourse.

These curious Londoners (Hogarth has drawn them) once at any rate had more (or less) than they were expecting, when, in 1705, John Smith, a burglar, was reprieved after he had been hanging for full fifteen minutes, and being immediately cut down, came to himself "to the great admiration of the spectators" (although baulked of their legitimate entertainment), and was quickly removed by his friends, enraptured or otherwise, to begin a second, if not a new, life.

And here, having come to Oxford Street before I intended, let us forget malefactors and the gallows in walk-

ing through the Wallace Collection at Hertford House, which is close by, and gain at the same time some idea of London's wealth of great painting: deflecting just for a moment to look at the very charming raised garden in the Italian manner which has just been ingeniously built over a subterranean electric light station in Duke Street. This is quite one of the happiest of new architectural fancies in London, with its two domed gateways, its stone terraces and its cypresses. One might almost be on Isola Bella.

Opinions would necessarily differ as to what is the greatest picture on the walls of Hertford House, but I suppose that from the same half dozen or so most of the good critics would select that one. It is not in me to support my choice with professional reasons, but I should be inclined to name Rembrandt's "Parable of the Unmerciful Servant." Near it come the same painter's portraits of Jan Pellicorne and his wife, and Velasquez' "Portrait of a Spanish Lady," sometimes called "La Femme a l'Eventail," of which I for one never tire, whether I think of it as a piece of marvellous painting or as a sad and fascinating personality.

But there are also such masterpieces as Andrea del Sarto's "Virgin and Child with St. John the Baptist and two Angels," notable for the beauty of it and the maternal sweetness and kindliness of it, and the quiet ease of the brush. It is not perhaps quite so lovely as a rather similar picture belonging to Lord Battersea, which was exhibited in London some ten years ago, and which, after the same painter's portrait of the young sculptor in the National Gallery, is the most exquisite of his paintings that I have seen in England; but it is very beautiful. And in the largest of the Wallace rooms may also be seen Frans Hals' "Laughing Cavalier," who does not really laugh at all but

smiles a faint mischievous smile that I dare swear worked more havoc than any laughter could. Here also is Murillo's "Charity of St. Thomas of Villanueva" (No. 97), with its suggestion of Andrea del Sarto in the beautiful painting of the mother and children to the right of it; and two charming Nicolas Maes': wistful, delicate, smiling boys with hawks on their wrists; and several other glorious Velasquez'; and Vandyck's superb "Phillipe le Roy, Seigneur de Ravels" (No. 94), with his Lady (No. 79); and one of Rubens' spreading landscapes; and two of Luini's exquisite Madonnas; and some feathery Hobbemas; and Gainsborough's "'Perdita' Robinson"; and a number of Reynolds at his best, of which I would carry away either "Mrs. Hoare with her Infant Son," or "Mrs. Nesbitt with a Dove"; and two of the best portraits by Cornelius de Vos I have seen; and the sweet and subtle Mierevelt that is reproduced opposite page 4. I name these only, but there is not one picture in the large room that does not repay individual study.

Before leaving it, I would say that, without going into any kind of rapture, I have always been very fond of Adrian Van der Velde's "Departure of Jacob into Egypt" (No. 80), partly for the interesting drama and reality of it all, and partly for its noble cumulus cloud, since no picture with a cumulus cloud painted at all like life ever fails to catch and hold my eye; and with this picture I associate in memory the Berchem on the opposite wall, "Coast Scene with Figures" (No. 25), for a kind of relationship which they bear the one to the other.

In Room XVII, which unites the great gallery with the Fête Galante school, I would mention the magnificent Claude — "Italian Landscape" (No. 114) — and the absolutely lovely Cuyp on the opposite wall (No. 138), "River

Scene with View of Dort," only more beautiful than the "River Scene" (No. 54) of the same master in the large room. The Dort picture has an evening quietude approached only by William Van der Velde the younger, in his "Ships in a Calm," in Room XIV, and by Berchem, in his "Landscape with Figures" (No. 183), all misty gold and glamour, in the same room.

Among the pictures in Room XV that I make a point of returning to again and again, one of the first is "A Fountain at Constantinople" (No. 312) by Narcisse Virgile Diaz de la Peña, commonly called Diaz, who lived at Barbizon, and was the dear friend of Theodore Rousseau, the painter of No. 283, and of Jean François Millet, who is not represented either here or at the National Gallery. Exactly what the fascination of this Turkish scene is I cannot define, but it affects me curiously and deeply, and always in the same way. This room is given up to French painters, Decamps being represented here better, I believe, than in any collection, if not so numerously as in the Thomy-Thierret gallery at the Louvre. Personally I could wish for more of Corot and Rousseau and Diaz, and less of Decamps, although his "Villa Doria Pamfili" (No. 267) always draws me to it and keeps me there. Meissonier too I could exchange for something more romantic. One Corot there is, and one Rousseau, both very fine, both inhabited by their own light; but there is no Millet. Having seen the Fête Galante school in all its luxuriance in Rooms XVIII, XIX and XX and on the staircase, one can perhaps understand why the peasants of Barbizon's greatest and simplest son have been excluded.

As to the Fête Galante school, there is a word to be said. If one has any feeling but one of intense satisfaction in connection with the Wallace treasure house, it is a hint

of regret that the collectors were so catholic. I would have had them display a narrower sympathy. I resent this interest in the art of Boucher and Lancret, Pater and, although not to the same extent, Watteau and Greuze. After Rembrandt and Velasquez, Andrea del Sarto and Reynolds, such artificialities almost hurt one. Each to his taste, of course, and I am merely recording mine; but as a general proposition it may be remarked that great art should not be too closely companioned by great artfulness. On the other hand there is much to be said for catholicity; and I would include one Fragonard in every gallery if only for the sound of his exquisite name.

Rooms XIV and XIII belong to the Dutch, and are hung with small pictures by great craftsmen — Rembrandt, with a curiously fascinating yellow landscape (No. 229); Terburg, who is at his happiest in the "Lady Reading a Letter" (No. 236), reproduced opposite page 36; William Van der Velde; Gerard Dou; Van der Heyden, with "The Margin of a Canal" (No. 225), so clear and solemn; Paul Potter, at his best in a small canvas; Caspar Nietscher, with a "Lace Maker" (No. 237), one of the simplest and most attractive works of this artificer that I have seen, and notable for the absence of that satin which he seems to have lived to reproduce in paint; and Gabriel Metsu, represented by several little masterpieces, all faithful to that womanly figure whom he painted so often, and who, I imagine, in return did so much for the painter's material well being: for she is always busy in such pleasant domestic offices as bringing enough wine, or preparing enough dinner, or playing an air upon the harpsichord; and is always smiling, and always the same (as the clever wife notoriously has to be), with her light hair smoothed back from her shining brow, and her fair nose with the dip where one looks

for the bridge, and her red jacket and white cap. One seems to know few women in real life better than this kindly Dutch friend of Gabriel Metsu. Lastly I would name Jan Steen, who in this collection is not at his greatest, although, as always with him, he gives a sign of it somewhere in every picture. In the "Merry Making in a Tavern" (No. 158), for example, the mother and child in the foreground are set down perfectly, as only his touch could have contrived; and in the "Harpsichord Lesson" (No. 154), the girl's hands on the keys are unmistakably the hands of a learner.

In Room XII are the Guardis for which the Wallace Collection is famous — soft and benign scenes in Venice, gondolas that are really moving, oars from which you can hear the silver drops splashing into the water, beautiful fairy architecture: Venice, in fact, floating on her Adriatic like a swan. The best Guardis ever brought together are here, hung side by side with the more severe and architectural Canaletto, to show how much more human and southern and romantic Venice may be made by pupil than by master. For the water colours you seek Rooms XXI and XXII, notable above all for their examples of Richard Parkes Bonington, that great and sensitive colourist, who, like Keats, had done his work and was dead before ordinary men have made up their minds as to what they will attempt. In two or three of these tiny drawings Bonington is at his best — particularly in No. 700, "Fishing Boats"; No. 714, "The Church of Sant' Ambrogio, Milan," and, above all, No. 708, "Sunset in the Pays de Caux," which might be placed beside Turner's greatest effects of light and lose nothing, although it is only seven and a half inches by ten.

On the ground floor are a few more pictures, among them two or three which one would like to see in the great



SUZANNE VAN COLLEN AND HER DAUGHTER

AFTER THE PICTURE BY REMBRANDT IN THE WALLACE COLLECTION

gallery, properly lighted, such as Bramantino's charming fresco of "The Youthful Gian Galeazzo Sforza reading Cicero," which should be reproduced for all boys' schools; Pieter Pourbus' very interesting "Allegorical Love Feast" — this painter's work being rare in England; and Bronzino's portrait of Eleanora de Toledo. In the room where these pictures hang are the cases devoted to coloured wax reliefs, a very amusing collection. In the great hall at the back is the armour, and elsewhere are statuary, furniture and a priceless company of miniatures, many of them very naked, but all dainty and smiling. I am no judge of such confectionery, but I recall one or two that seem to stand out as peculiarly dexterous or charming: I remember in particular a portrait wrongfully described as "The Two Miss Gunnings," by Adolphe-Hall, and Samuel Cooper's "Charles II." I have said nothing of the Sèvres porcelain and enamelled snuff boxes, the bronzes and ecclesiastical jewels. I may indeed almost be said to have said nothing of the collection at all; for it defies description. Amazing however you consider it, when you realise that it was all the work of two connoisseurs it becomes incredible. Certainly its acquisition is the best thing that has happened to London in my time.

CHAPTER III

MAYFAIR AND THE GEORGIANS

The Stately Homes of London — Shepherd's Market and the Past — Gay's *Trivia* — Memorial Tablets — Mayfair — Keith's Chapel — Marriage on Easy Terms — Curzon Street — Shelley and the Lark — Literary Associations — Berkeley Square — The Beaux — Dover Street — John Murray's — Grosvenor Square — South Audley Street and Chesterfield House

OF the vast tracts of wealthy residential streets in Bayswater and Belgravia and South Kensington there is nothing to say, because they are not interesting. They are too new to have a history (I find myself instinctively refusing to loiter in any streets built since Georgian days), and for the most part too regular to compel attention as architecture. But Mayfair is different: Mayfair's bricks and stones are eloquent.

Mayfair, whose oldest houses date from the early years of the eighteenth century, is strictly speaking only a very small district; but we have come to consider its boundaries Piccadilly on the south, on the north Oxford Street, on the east Bond Street, and on the west Park Lane. Since most of the people who live there have one or more other houses, in England or Scotland, Mayfair out of the season is a very desolate land; but that is all to the good from the point of view of the wanderer. It is still one of the most difficult districts to learn and so many are its *culs de*

sac — often a mews, for from almost every Mayfair house may be heard a horse stamping — and so capricious its streets, that one may lose one's way in Mayfair very easily. I can still do so, and still make a discovery every time; whether, as on my last visit, the little very green oasis between South Street and Mount Street with the children in an upper room of a school singing a grave hymn, or, on the visit before, an old ramifying stable-yard in Shepherd Street, absolutely untouched since the coaching days.

In Shepherd's Market, just here, which is one of the least modernised parts of London, it is still possible to feel in the eighteenth century. It lies just to the south of Curzon Street, in the democratic way in which in London poor neighbourhoods jostle wealthy ones, and it is a narrow street or two filled with bustling little shops and busy shopkeepers. Many of the houses have hardly been touched since they were built two hundred years ago, nor have the manners of the place altered to any serious degree. Gentlemen's gentlemen, such as one meets about here, remain very much the same: the coachmen and butlers and footmen who to-day emerge from the ancient Sun inn, wiping their mouths, are not, save for costume, very different from those that emerged wiping their mouths from the same inn in the days of Walpole and Charles James Fox. Edward Shepherd, the architect who built Shepherd's Market, lived in Wharncliff House, the low white house in its own grounds with a little lodge, opposite the Duke of Marlborough's square white palace, and it still looks to be one of the pleasantest houses in London.

A thought that is continually coming to mind as one walks about older London and meditates on its past is how modern that past is — how recently civilisation as we

understand it came upon the town. Superficially much is changed, but materially nothing. Half an hour spent on the old *Spectator* or *Tatler*, or with Walpole's *Letters* or Boswell's *Johnson*, shows you that. The London of Gay's *Trivia*, that pleasant guide to the art of walking in the streets of this city, is at heart our own London — with trifling modifications. The Bully has gone, the Nicker (the gentleman who broke windows with halfpence) has gone, the fop is no longer offensive with scent, wigs have become approximately a matter of secrecy, and the conditions of life are less simple; but Londoners are the same, and always will be, I suppose, and the precincts of St. James still have their milkmaids. It is too late in the day to quote from the poem (which some artist with a genial backward look, like Mr. Hugh Thomson, ought to illustrate), but my little edition has an index, and I might quote a little from that, partly because it is interesting in itself, and partly because it transforms the reader into his own poet. Here are some entries: —

Alley, the pleasure of walking in one.
Bookseller skilled in the weather
Barber, by whom to be shunned
Butchers, to be avoided
Cane, the convenience of one
Coat, how to chuse one for the winter
Countryman perplexed to find the way
Coachman, his whip dangerous
Crowd parted by a coach
Cellar, the misfortunes of falling into one
Dustman, to whom offensive
Fop, the ill consequence of passing too near one.
Father, the happiness of a child who knows his own.
Ladies dress neither by reason nor instinct.



LADY READING A LETTER

AFTER THE PICTURE BY TERBURG IN THE WALLACE COLLECTION

Milkman of the city unlike a rural one.
Overton the print seller
Oyster, the courage of him that first ate one
Prentices not to be relied on
Perriwigs, how stolen off the head
Playhouse, a caution when you lead a lady out of it
Shoes, what most proper for walkers
Stockings, how to prevent their being spattered.
Schoolboys mischievous in frosty weather
Umbrella, its use
Wig, what to be worn in a mist
Way, of whom to be inquired.
Wall, when to keep it.

From these heads one ought — given a knack of rhyme — to be able to make a *Trivia* for oneself; and they show that the London life of Gay's day — *Trivia* was published in 1712 — was very much what it is now. There were no Music Halls, no cricket matches, no railway stations; but I doubt if they lacked much else that we have.

From No. 1 London the best way to Shepherd's Market is by Hamilton Place and Hertford Street, or it may be gained from Piccadilly by the narrow White Horse Street. Hertford Street is a street of grave houses where many interesting men and women have lived, only one of whom, however — Dr. Jenner, the vaccinator, at No. 14 — has a tablet. The erection of tablets in historic London — a duty shared by the County Council and the Society of Arts — is very capriciously managed, owing to a great extent to the reluctance of owners or occupiers to have their walls thus distinguished for gapers. Mayfair, so rich in residents of eminence, has hardly any tablets. Upon Hertford Street's roll of fame is also Capability Brown, who invented the shrubbery, or at any rate made it his ambition to make

shrubberies grow where none had grown before, and was employed on this task, and on the laying out of gardens, by gentlemen all over England. Sheridan lived at No. 10 during four of his more prosperous years, in the house where General Burgoyne (who was also a playwright) died. Bulwer Lytton was at No. 36 in the eighteen-thirties.

Mayfair proper, which takes its name from the fair which was held there every May until the middle of the eighteenth century, on ground covered now by a part of Curzon Street and Hertford Street, has changed its character as completely as any London district. In those days it was notorious. Not only was the fair something of a scandal, but the Rev. Alexander Keith, in a little chapel of his own, with a church porch, close to Curzon Chapel, was in the habit of joining in matrimony more convenient than holy as many as six thousand couples a year, on the easiest terms then procurable south of Gretna Green. Among those that took advantage of the simplicities and incuriousness of Keith's Chapel was James, fourth Duke of Hamilton, in his curtain-ring marriage with the younger of the beautiful Miss Gunnings. Curtain-ring and Keith notwithstanding, this lady became the mother of two Dukes of Hamilton, and, in her second marriage, of two Dukes of Argyle. Keith meanwhile died in the Fleet prison. Not only is his chapel no more, but Curzon Chapel, its authorised neighbour and scandalised rival, is no more; for a year or so ago the Duke of Marlborough, wishing a new town house, used its site.

Curzon Street, of which this mansion is one of the most striking buildings, might be called the most interesting street in Mayfair. Although it has new houses and newly-fronted houses, it retains much of its old character, and it

is still at each end a *cul de sac* for carriages, and that is always a preservative condition. Now and then one comes to a house which must be as it was from the first — No. 35, for example — which has the old windows with white frames almost flush with the façade (now, I believe, forbidden by the urban authorities, but a certain aid to picturesqueness, as Bedford Row eminently shows), and the old tiled roof. Like so many houses in this neighbourhood, No. 21 retains its extinguishers for the torches of the link boys. To give a list of Curzon Street's famous inhabitants would not be easy; but it was at No. 19 that Lord Beaconsfield died, and at No. 8 died the Miss Berrys, of whom Walpole has so much that is delightful to say.

Curzon Street's tributaries have also preserved much of their early character: Half Moon Street, Clarges Street, the north part of which has the quaintest little lodgings, Bolton Street, and so forth. In Half Moon Street, named, like many other London streets and omnibus destinations, after a public house, lived for a while such very different contemporaries as Hazlitt, Shelley and Madame d'Arblay. I like the picture of Shelley there a hundred years ago: "There was," says Hogg in his life of his friend, "a little projecting window in Half Moon Street in which Shelley might be seen from the street all day long, book in hand, with lively gestures and bright eyes; so that Mrs. N. said he wanted only a pan of clear water and a fresh turf to look like some young lady's lark hanging outside for air and song." Mrs. N. might walk through Half Moon Street to-day till her legs ached, and see no poet. Our poets are for the most part at the British Museum or the Board of Trade, and are not at all like larks.

Clarges Street, which is next Half Moon Street on the east, has its roll of fame too. Dr. Johnson's blue-stock-

inged friend Mrs. Elizabeth Carter died at a great age at No. 21, and Nelson's warm-hearted friend Lady Hamilton occupied No. 11, from 1804 to 1806. Edmund Kean lived at No. 12 for eight years, and Macaulay lodged at No. 3 on his return from India. No. 32, in Mr. Kinnaird the banker's days, was one of Byron's haunts. Bolton Street, near by, which just two hundred years ago was the most westerly street in London, was the home of Pope's friend Martha Blount, who inspired some of his most exquisite compliments; and it was there that Madame d'Arblay moved in 1818 and was visited by Sir Walter Scott and Samuel Rogers.

At its east end Curzon Street narrows to a passage between the gardens of Devonshire House and Lansdowne House, which takes the foot passenger into Berkeley Street. Once, however, a horseman made the journey too: a highwayman, who after a successful coup in Piccadilly, evaded his pursuers by dashing down the steps and along this passage — a feat which led to the vertical iron bars now to be seen at either end.

Berkeley Square is smaller than Grosvenor Square but it has more character. Many of the wealthy inhabitants of Grosvenor Square are willing to take houses as they find them; but in Berkeley Square they make them peculiarly their own. At No. 11 Horace Walpole lived for eighteen years (with alternations at Strawberry Hill), and here he died in 1797. At No. 45 Clive committed suicide. "Auld Robin Gray" was written at No. 21.

To the task of tracing the past of this fashionable quarter there would of course be no end, and indeed one could not have a much more interesting occupation; but this is not that kind of book, and I have perhaps said enough to send readers independently to Wheatley and



THE "LAUGHING" CAVALIER

AFTER THE PICTURE BY FRANS HALS IN THE WALLACE COLLECTION

Cunningham,[1] who have been so useful to me and to whom old London is more familiar than new. For anyone bent on this pleasant enterprise of re-peopling Mayfair, Berkeley Square is a very good starting point. Charles Street, Bruton Street, and Mount Street all lead from it, of which Charles Street perhaps retains most of its ancient peace and opulent gravity. One of its new houses, with three dormer windows, has some of the best wrought iron in London. At No. 42 lived, in 1792, Beau Brummell; while another Charles Street dandy — but only half a one, since he smirched his escutcheon by writing books and legislating — was the first Lord Lytton. Here also Mr. Burke flirted with Fanny Burney, before Mrs. Burke's face too. Later, Beau Brummell moved to 4 Chesterfield Street, where he had for neighbour George Selwyn, who made the best jokes of his day and dearly loved a hanging. In Bruton Street — at No. 24 — lived in 1809 another George who was also a wit, but of deeper quality, George Canning.

Through Bruton Street we gained Bond Street, London's Rue de la Paix, which only a golden key can unlock; but into Bond Street we will not now stray, but return to Berkeley Square and climb Hay Hill, — where the Prince of Wales, afterwards George IV, with a party, was once waylaid by footpads; but to little profit, for they could muster only half a crown between them — and so come to Dover Street, where once lived statesmen and now are modistes. Among its old inhabitants were John Evelyn, who died in the ninth house on the east side from Piccadilly, and Harley, Earl of Oxford, in whose house, the second from Piccadilly on the west side, Pope and Swift and Ar-

[1] *London Past and Present. Its Histories, Associations and Traditions*, by H. B. Wheatley, based upon Peter Cunningham's *Handbook of London*. Three volumes. Murray.

buthnot used to meet in what Arbuthnot called Martin's office — Martin being Scriblerus, master of the art of sinking. In another Dover Street house lived Sir Joshua Reynolds' sister, whose guests often included Johnson and his satellite.

Albemarle Street, which also is no longer residential and has been given up to business, also has great traditions. Lord Bute lived here, and here Zoffany painted the portrait of John Wilkes; Charles James Fox lived here for a little while, and Robert Adam and James Adam, who with their brothers built the Adelphi, both died here. Louis XVIII stayed at Grillion's Hotel when in exile in 1814. But the most famous house is John Murray's, at No. 50, where the *Quarterly Review*, so savage and tartarly, was founded, and whence so much that is best in literature emerged, whose walls are a portrait gallery of English men of letters. Byron's is of course the greatest name in this house, but Borrow's belongs to it also. Scott and Byron first met beneath this roof.

It was at the Mount Coffee House in Mount Street, which takes one from Berkeley Square to Grosvenor Square, that Shelley's first wife Harriet Westbrook, about whom there has been too much chatter, lived, her father being the landlord; but Mount Street bears few if any traces of that time, for the rebuilder has been very busy there. And so leaving on the left Farm Street, where Mayfair's Roman Catholics worship, we turn into Grosvenor Square. Grosvenor Square is two hundred years old and has had many famous residents. It was in an ante-room of the Earl of Chesterfield's house here that Johnson cooled his heels and warmed his temper. Mr. Thrale died in Grosvenor Square, and so did John Wilkes, at No. 30. At No. 22 lived Sir William and Lady Hamilton, with "Vathek"

Beckford, and thither went Nelson after the battle of the Nile. When gas came in as the new illuminant, Grosvenor Square was sceptical and contemptuous, and it clung to oil and candles for some years longer than its neighbours.

The two Grosvenor Streets, Upper and Lower, have rich associations too. Mrs. Oldfield died at No. 60 Upper Grosvenor Street in 1730; at No. 13 Scott and Coleridge had a memorable meeting in 1809. The two Brook Streets, and indeed all the Grosvenor Square tributaries, are also worth studying by the light of Wheatley and Cunningham; while South Audley Street, although it is now principally shops, is rich in sites that have historic interest. At 77, for instance, lived Alderman Wood, the champion of Caroline of Brunswick, who was his guest there on her return from Italy in 1820. Many notable persons were buried in Grosvenor Chapel, among them Lady Mary Wortley Montagu and John Wilkes.

The house within its own walls and gates at the south-east corner of South Audley Street is Chesterfield House, built in the middle of the eighteenth century for the famous fourth Earl of Chesterfield, who wrote the *Letters*, and who by his want of generosity (but that was in Grosvenor Square) stimulated Dr. Johnson to a better letter than any of his own. And at this point we enter Curzon Street again.

CHAPTER IV

ST. JAMES'S AND PICCADILLY EAST

The other Park Lane — High Politics — Samuel Rogers — St. James's Place — Male streets — Hoby the Bootmaker — Carlyle's feet — St. James's Street — St. James's Palace — Blücher in London — Pall Mall and Nell Gwynn — The Clubs — St. James's Square — Dr. Johnson's Night Walk — Jermyn Street — St. James's Church — Piccadilly again — "To a Lost Girl with a Sweet Face" — The Albany — Burlington House — The Diploma Gallery — A Leonardo — Christy Minstrels and Maskelyne and Cook — Georgian London once more — Bond Street and Socrates — Shopping — Tobacconists — Chemists — The Demon Distributor — Bond Street's Past — Regent Street — The Flower Girls

FROM Mayfair it is a pleasant walk for one still interested in the very core of aristocratic life to that other Park Lane, Queen's Walk, lined also with its palaces looking westward over grass and trees — these, however, being the grass and trees of Green Park. Some of London's most distinguished houses are here — among them Hamilton House and Stafford House, where are pictures beyond price. Arlington Street, where the upper Queen's Walk houses have their doors, has long been dedicated to high politics. Every brick in it has some political association: from Sir Robert Walpole to the late Lord Salisbury. Horace Walpole lived long at No. 5, and was born opposite. At No. 4 lived Charles James Fox; and it was at lodgings in Arlington Street in 1801 that Lady Nelson parted

for ever from her husband, being "sick of hearing of 'Dear Lady Hamilton.'"

St. James's Place also has political associations, but is more tinged with literature than Arlington Street. Addison lived here, and here lived Pope's fair Lepel. Fox, who seems to have lodged or lived everywhere, was here in 1783. "Perdita" Robinson was at No. 13; Mrs. Delany died here; and Byron was lodging at No. 8 when *English Bards and Scotch Reviewers* burst on the town. But the king of St. James's Place was Samuel Rogers, who lived at No. 22 from 1803 until 1855, when he died aged ninety-five, and in that time entertained everyone who was already distinguished and distinguished the others by entertaining them.

St. James's Place is the quietest part of aristocratic London. I have been there even in mid afternoon in the season and literally have seen no sign of life in any of its odd ramifications. Every house is staid; every house, one feels, has had its history and perhaps is making history now; wealth and birth and breeding and taste are as evident here as they can be absent elsewhere. One doubts if any Cockney child, even the most audacious, venturing up the narrowest of narrow passages from the Green Park into this Debrettian backwater, ever dared to do more than peep at its blue-blooded gravity and precipitately withdraw. I would go to St. James's Place for a rest cure: it is the last sanctuary in London which the motor-bus will desecrate.

Arlington Street and St. James's Place have kept their residential character; but St. James's Street and Pall Mall have lost theirs. They are now the principal male streets of London. Women are the exception there, and there are no London streets so given up to women as these to men.

The buildings are clubs and a few men's shops, most famous of which in the past was Hoby's, the bootmaker. Hoby claimed to have won Vittoria, and indeed all Wellington's battles, by virtue of the boots he had made for him in St. James's Street and the prayers he had offered for him in Islington, where he was a Methodist preacher. I suppose there are still characters among London tradesmen; but one does not hear much about them. Interest in character seems to have died out, the popular ambition to-day being for every man to be as much like every other man as he can. Hoby was splendid. When Ensign Horace Churchill of the Guards burst into his shop in a fury, vowing never to employ him again, the bootmaker quietly called to one of his assistants, "John, put up the shutters. It's all over with us. Ensign Churchill has withdrawn his custom." Hoby kept all the Iron Duke's orders for boots; I wonder where they are now. I know personally of only one great man's letter to his bootmaker, and that is on the walls of a shop near Charing Cross, and in it Thomas Carlyle says that there at last, after many years, have his feet found comfort.

Before St. James's Street was given up to clubs—White's with its famous bow window, Boodle's, Brooks's, the Thatched House, to mention the old rather than the new — it had its famous inhabitants, among them Edmund Waller, Gilray the caricaturist, who committed suicide by throwing himself from a window at No. 29, Campbell the poet, and James Maclean the gentleman highwayman.

St. James's Street has the great scenic merit of terminating in the gateway of St. James's Palace, a beautiful, grave, Tudor structure of brick. The palace, now the home of court officials, was the royal abode from the reign of William III, in whose day Whitehall was burnt, to



ST. JAMES'S STREET AND ST. JAMES'S PALACE

George IV. Queen Mary died there. Charles I was imprisoned there before his execution and walked to Whitehall on the fatal morning from this place — to bow his comely head down as upon a bed. General Monk lived in the palace for a while, and Verrio, the Italian mural painter, who covered fair white ceilings with sprawling goddesses and cupids, had his home here in the reign of James II. In 1814 Blücher lodged in Ambassadors' Yard, and, settled in his window with his pipe, bowed to the admiring crowds — an agreeable picture to think upon. Ambassadors' Yard is still one of the quietest spots in London, and indeed the Palace is a very pleasant place in which to retire from the streets, for those who prefer the repose of masonry to the repose of nature, such as St. James's Park offers. Levees are still held at St. James's; but the old practice of hearing the Laureate declaim their state poems has been abandoned without any particular wrench. Every morning at eleven the lover of military music may enjoy the Guards' band.

And so we come to the Park, of whose beauty I have already said something, and to the splendours of the new Mall, which is to be London's Champs Elysées, and to the monotonous opulence of Carlton House Terrace, the new home of ambassadors.

Pall Mall is not only more sombre in mien but has more seriousness than St. James's Street. The War Office is here, and here are the Carlton and the Athenæum. Marlborough House is here too. But it was not always thus, for at the house which is now No. 79, but has been rebuilt and rebuilt, once lived Mistress Elinor Gwynn, over whose garden wall she leaned to exchange badinage with Charles II. The impostor Psalmanazar lodged in Pall Mall, and so did Gibbon, greatest of ironists. Gainsborough painted there, and Cosway, and there was the house of John Julius

Angerstein, whose collection of old masters formed the nucleus of our National Gallery.

Captain John Morris's pleasant song about the charms of the sweet shady side of Pall Mall over all the allurements of the country has never found any echo in me. I find Pall Mall equally forbidding in wet weather or fine. There is something forbidding about these huge, sombre, material monasteries called clubs, solemn temples of the best masculine form, compounded of gentlemen and waiters, dignity and servility. They oppress me. Pall Mall has no sweet shade; its shade is gloomy.

Turning up between the Army and Navy and the Junior Carlton clubs one comes to St. James's Square, once another abode of the rich and powerful, and now a square of clubs and annexes of the War Office, with a few private houses only. In 1695, when it was already built round, the square was a venue for duellists, and in 1773 a highwayman on horseback could still carry on his profession there. At Norfolk House, No. 31, George III was born. The iron posts at No. 2 were cannon captured off Finisterre by Anson. At No. 15 lived Thurlow. At the north corner of King Street was Lord Castlereagh's, and here his body was brought after his suicide in 1822. It was round this square that Johnson and Savage, being out of money, walked and walked for hours one night, "in high spirits and brimful of patriotism," inveighing against the ministry and vowing to stand by their country. Later Johnson used often to quote the stanza about the Duchess of Leeds —

> She shall have all that's fine and fair,
> And the best of silk and satin shall wear,
> And live in a coach to take the air,
> And have a house in St. James's Square, —

saying that it "comprised nearly all the advantages that wealth can give."

Other streets in this neighbourhood have their pasts: Bury Street, where Swift had lodgings when he was in London, and Steele, after his marriage, and Moore and Crabbe; Duke Street, where, at No. 67, Burke had rooms; King Street, where Christie's is situated, the house where old masters and old silver change hands with such pathetic persistence; and Jermyn Street, home of bachelors whose clubs are their father and their mother, where in its palmy residential days lived great men and women, even Marlborough himself and Sir Isaac Newton. Gray lodged here regularly, over Roberts the hosier's or Frisby the oilman's; and in 1832 in a house where the Hammam Turkish Bath now is Sir Walter Scott lay very near his end.

To the end of all, in the case of many illustrious persons, we come at St. James's Church, between this street and Piccadilly, one of Wren's red brick buildings and a very beautiful one too, with a font and other work by Grinling Gibbons and a Jacobean organ. Here lie cheerful Master Cotton, who helped with the *Compleat Angler*, and Van der Velde the painter of sea-fights, and the ingenious but reprehensible Tom d'Urfey, and Dr. Arbuthnot, friend of Pope and Swift and Gay and wit. Mrs. Delany is also here, and Dodsley the bookseller, and the dissolute Old Q, and Gilray; and here was baptised the great Earl of Chatham.

And so we come to Piccadilly again — the business part of it — with its crowded pavements, its tea rooms and picture galleries and restaurants. Piccadilly on a fine afternoon in May must be the busiest rich man's street in the world: but it is seldom quiet at any hour of the day or night, or at any time of the year. At night, indeed, it takes on a

new character, of which there is unhappily only too much to say, but nothing here, unless perhaps I print some verses which framed themselves in my mind one summer night, or early morning, last year, as I walked from Fleet Street to Kensington, by way of the Strand and this famous road.

TO A LOST GIRL WITH A SWEET FACE

Piccadilly, 12.30 A.M. *June* 23, 1905

Ere yet your girlish feet had won
  Mere standing on Life's hard highway,
You deemed you had the right to run
  At riot speed, and none to stay.

The counsels of the wise and old,
  To curb desire, vexed not your breast:
For they, they were by nature cold,
  And you were you, and you knew best!

Your sole adviser was your blood.
  Poor child, why should you know mistrust?
Instructed now by London mud,
  How unmistakable seems lust!

Too warm your heart, O vanquishèd,
  Your hands too eager for delight:
A cool and calculating head
  Were better armour for this fight.

Quick is the Town to profit in
  Its weaklings' generosity:
And kindness, lacking discipline,
  Can be one's hardest enemy.

And so what should be joy is hell:
Wounded, debased, forlorn you go:
And all because you loved too well,
And man, that should be friend, is foe.

St. James's Church is Piccadilly's most beautiful old building; the Institute of Water Colour Painters its most impressive new one; Burlington House is its principal lion, and the Albany its quietest tributary. Many famous men made their home in this mundane cloister, where all is well-ordered, still and discreet — like a valet in list slippers. Monk Lewis had his cell at No. I A; Canning was at 5 A; Byron at 2 A, in rooms that afterwards passed to Lytton; Macaulay was at 1 E for fifteen years — in the eighteen-forties and fifties. Gladstone also was a brother of the Albany for a while.

Of Burlington House, since it changes its exhibitions twice a year, there is little to say in a book of this character. As a preliminary step for the full enjoyment of the Bond Street tea shops there is nothing like the summer Academy, where four thousand pictures wet from the easel touch each other; but the winter exhibitions of Old Masters are among the first intellectual pleasures that London offers, and are a recurring reminder of the fine taste and generosity of the English collector, and the country's wealth of great art.

Few people find their way to the permanent Diploma Gallery at the top of Burlington House, where hang the pictures with which in a way every Royal Academician pays his footing, together with a few greater works. But to climb the stairs is important, for the Diploma Gallery contains what might be called without extravagance the most beautiful drawing in London — a Holy Family by

Leonardo da Vinci, reproduced here opposite page 294. Being in monochrome this reproduction does it no injustice, and, though far smaller, preserves much of its benign sweetness, and the lovely maternity of it. A bas-relief of Michael Angelo and a figure of Temperance by Giorgione are other treasures of this gallery. Reynolds' sitter's chair and easel and three or four fine portraits are also here; Maclise's vast charcoal cartoon of the meeting of Wellington and Blücher: sixty-six designs for Homer by Flaxman; Watts' "Death of Cain"; and a number of impressionistic oil sketches by Constable, some of them the most vivid presentments of English weather that exist. The rest is strictly diploma work and not too interesting. The sculpture room, full of diploma casts, yellow with paint or London grime, is, I think, the most depressing chamber I ever hurried from; but a few of the pictures stand out — Reynolds' portrait of Sir William Chambers, and Raeburn's "Boy and Rabbit," and Sargent's "Venetian Interior," for example. But it is Leonardo and Michael Angelo and Constable that make the ascent necessary.

A few years ago it was to Piccadilly that every fortunate child was taken, to hear the Christy Minstrels; but this form of entertainment having been killed in England, within doors at any rate, that famous troupe is no more. The St. James's Hall has been razed to the ground, and as I write a new hotel is rising on its site; yet twenty years ago the names of Moore and Burgess were as well known and as inextricably associated with London's fun as any have ever been. But the red ochre of the Music Hall comedian's nose now reigns where once burnt cork had sway: and Brother Bones asks no more conundrums of Mr. Johnson — "Can you tole me?" — and Mr. Johnson no more sends the question ricochetting back for Brother



VIRGIN AND CHILD

AFTER THE PICTURE BY ANDREA DEL SARTO IN THE WALLACE COLLECTION

Bones triumphantly to supply its answer. A thousand humorous possibilities have been discovered and developed since then, from tramp cyclism to the farces of the cinematoscope, and faces are blacked now only on the sands.

Gone too is the Egyptian Hall, that other Piccadilly Mecca of happy childhood, where incredible illusions held the audience a-gape twice daily. Maskelyne still remains, but there is no Cook any more, and the new Home of Mystery is elsewhere; while every Music Hall has its mysteries too. Change! Change! But the Burlington Arcade remains, through which, half stifled by heat and patchouli, one may if one likes regain the quietude of Georgian London: for one comes that way to Cork Street and Old Burlington Street and Boyle Street and Savile Row, which have been left pretty much as they were. In Old Burlington Street lived General Wolfe as a youth; and here lived and died the poet Akenside. Pope's friend Arbuthnot lived in Cork Street. Savile Row being the headquarters of tailoring is now almost exclusively a masculine street, save for the little messenger girls who run between the cutters and the sewing rooms; but once it was a street of family mansions, many of which are not much altered except in occupants since they were built in the seventeen-thirties. Poor Sheridan, who once lived at No. 14, died at No. 17 in great distress — just before assistance came to him from the Regent, who had been postponing it for weeks and weeks, a failure of duty which led to Moore's most scathing poem. George Tierney, who fought a duel with Pitt, lived at No. 11, which previously was tenanted by Cowper's friend Joseph Hill, to whom he wrote rhyming epistles. Grote's house is marked by a tablet.

One of Piccadilly's claims to notice I must not overlook — its shops. Though not so wholly given up to shops as Regent Street or Bond Street, where everything can be bought, Piccadilly contains certain shops of world-wide fame, whose windows I for one never tire of studying. One of these is that condiment house on the south side where, according to Sydney Smith, the gourmets of England will make their last stand when their country is under invasion. It is still as wonderful as in the days of the witty Canon: the ends of the earth still combine to fill it with exotic delicacies. Close by is I suppose the best-known taxidermist and naturalist in the world, where you may see rhinoceroses' heads and hartebeests' horns, tiger skin rugs and coiled boa-constrictors, all ready for the English halls of great hunters. These shops are unique, and so also is that on the north side whose window is filled with varnished chickens and enamelled tongues, all ready for Goodwood or Henley or Lord's, where it is the rule that food shall be decorative and expensive.

Bond Street, which Socrates would find more than filled with articles that he could do without, is more complete as a shopping centre. You may buy there anything from a muff-warmer to a tiara, from caravan-borne tea to an Albert Cuyp; for old and new picture dealers have made it their own, and I shall never forget that it was at Lawrie's in 1893 that I first saw Corot at his best — in four great pictures from a Scotch collection. Next to the picture dealers I like Bond Street's jewellers, although far behind the Rue de la Paix's both in taste and experimental daring. In the matter of jewels London is still faithful to its old specialising habit — the best jewellers being still in Bond Street and close by, and its diamond merchants still congregating almost exclusively in Hatton Garden; but a

decentralising tendency is steadily coming upon the town. Not so very long ago, for example, Wardour Street stood for old furniture, and Holywell Street for old books. But to-day Holywell Street does not exist, and old furniture shops have sprung up all over London, particularly perhaps in the Brompton Road and Church Street, Kensington. Longacre, once wholly in the hands of carriage-makers, is now a centre also for motor cars, which may, however, be bought elsewhere too. The publishers, once faithful to Paternoster Row, have (following John Murray) now spread to the west. Departmental London, so far as retail trade is concerned, is no more.

The saddest change in the shops of London is in the chemists: the greatest, in the tobacconists. There must now be a tobacconist to every ten men of the population, or something near it, and many of these already save the purchaser such a huge percentage that a time must be coming when they will pay us to buy tobacco at all. The new tobacconists are in every way unworthy of the old: they know no repose, as a tobacconist should; they serve you with incredible despatch and turn to the next customer. To loiter in one of their shops is beyond consideration and no Prince Florizel could be a tobacconist to-day, unless he was prepared for bankruptcy. Of course there are still a few old-fashioned firms on secure foundations where a certain leisure may be observed; but it is superficial leisure. I feel convinced that below stairs there is a seething activity. And even in these shops one cannot really waste time, although to enable one to do that with grace and a sense of virtue is of course the principal duty of the leaf. It will prove our decadence, our want of right feeling, of reverence, when I say that in all London I know to-day of only two tobacconists with enough piety to retain the

wooden Highlander who once was as necessary and important to the dealer in Returns and Rappee as is the figure of Buddha to a joss house. And only one of these two tobacconists has sufficient virtue to set his Highlander on the pavement. This good man (all honour to him!) purveys the weed in Tottenham Court Road, on the west side, not far from the Euston Road. May he live long and prosper!

Sadder still is the decay of the chemist. There is a real old chemist's window in Oxford Street, opposite Great Portland Street, with a row of coloured jars such as poor Rosamund lost an excursion for; but how rare these are! Our new business habits, imported chiefly from America, have in no respect done so much injury — aesthetically — as in substituting the new store-druggist's crowded window for the old chromatic display. In the modern stress of competition there is no room to spare for pure decoration; and so the purple jars have gone. And within all is changed too. An element of bustle has come into the chemist's life. Of old he was quiet and sympathetic and whispering: now his attitude is one best described by the words "Next please." I wonder that the sealing wax remains. Surely there is some American device to improve upon sealing wax? A few of the good old shops may still be seen, if one is quick. There is one in Norton Folgate with a row of coloured jars; and, best of all, there is that wonderful herbalist's in Aldgate, opposite Butchers' Row, which has been there since 1720 and where you may still buy Dr. Lettsom's pills and the famous Nine Oils.

Another commercial sign of the times in London is the increase of news-agents (in addition to the kerb-stone salesmen), and with them the rise of the demon distributor. No recent London street type is more noticeable than he:

a large-boned centaur, half-hooligan, half-bicycle, who, bent double beneath his knapsack of news, dashes on his wheel between the legs of horses, under wagons and through policemen, in the feverish enterprise of spreading the tidings of winner and starting price. A few years ago London knew him not; to-day we should not know London without him.

But I am forgetting that we are in Bond Street, where these rough-riding Mercuries do not penetrate. The past of this thoroughfare has been almost wholly buried beneath modern commerce, but it is interesting to recollect that it was at Long's Hotel in Old Bond Street in 1815 that Scott saw Byron for the last time; and at No. 41, which was then a silk-bag shop, on March 18, 1768, that the creator of Uncle Toby and Corporal Trim died. It was at No. 141 New Bond Street that in 1797 Lord Nelson lay for three months after the battle of Cape St. Vincent, where his arm was shot.

From Bond Street one is quickly in Regent Street, once more among the shops and in the present day; but Regent Street is not interesting except as part of a great but futile scheme to plan out a stately and symmetrical London in honour of a blackguard prince. Of this, Portland Place, Park Crescent and Regent's Park are the other portions. The project was noble, as the width of Portland Place testifies, but it was not in character with London, and it failed. No second attempt to provide London with a Parisian thoroughfare — with anything approaching French width and luxury — occurred until a year or two ago, when the Mall was taken in hand and the space in front of Buckingham Palace was made symmetrical.

Regent Street in its turn leads to Oxford Street, where

the great drapery shops — I should say, emporiums — are: paradises of mannequins and super-mannequins. More attractive to me is the little, almost Venetian, knot of flower-sellers who have made the island in Oxford Circus their own, in summer adding to its southern air by large red umbrellas. Of such women one should buy one's flowers.

CHAPTER V

LEICESTER SQUARE AND THE HALLS

Hogarth and Sir Joshua — The Music Hall — The Lion-Pluralists — The Strength of the Audience — The Comedians' Appeal — London Street Humour — Dan Leno — Cinquevalli the Superb — Perfection — The Coliseum — Performances at Noon — The Circus and the Hippodrome — The old Simplicities — Performing Animals — Marceline

LEICESTER Square, once Leicester Fields, took its name from Leicester House, which stood where Daly's Theatre and its companion buildings now stand, and was originally the home of Robert Sidney, Earl of Leicester, the father of Algernon Sidney and Waller's Sacharissa. The houses, or modern representatives of the houses, of its two most famous inhabitants, Hogarth and Sir Joshua Reynolds, may still be seen, each marked by a tablet: Hogarth's on the east side, and Sir Joshua's on the west. No artists live there now: rather is it a centre for artistes.

Although neither the Alhambra nor the Empire is a music hall in the full sense of the term as we now use it, but rather a variety theatre, we may pause here, near Shakespeare's statue, to ponder a little upon London's special form of entertainment — the Music Hall. For many as are her theatres — and during the past few years they have doubled in number — her Music Halls are more numerous still, and are more steadily filled, a large number

of them twice on a night. The theatre she shares with all nations; but the Music Hall proper is still curiously her own and was, I believe, her invention.

Of London's many Halls only two or three have programmes peculiar to themselves: the others are supplied by roving performers who appear sometimes at as many as four in one evening, rushing from one to another in their broughams or motor cars, and perhaps changing their costumes on the journey. The system is an absurd one, for it not only tends to eliminate personal character, but introduces into the evening's progress a mathematical precision that is contrary to the Bohemian free-and-easiness that ought to prevail. Encores become impossible, because the unforeseen delay of five minutes thus produced in one Hall would upset the time tables of the two or three others whither the comedian is bound like an arrow immediately he has acknowledged the applause.

London, however, bows to the pluralising system. Her audiences, being infinitely stronger than managers, could stop it instantly if they wished; but the ordinary London audience neither uses its strength nor is aware that it has any. Instead, it grumbles a little, and composes itself for the next "turn."

The conservatism of the Hall is an interesting study. Although this class of entertainment has so grown in popularity that it may now be said to draw all classes, the articulate performers still address one class and one only—the class to whom the old vulgar jokes alone appeal; the class for whom every low comedian in pantomimes all over the country toils every Christmas, and for whom the comic scenes in melodrama are invariably written. The theatres have room for illustration of every variety of life, and in their pits and galleries at even the most intellectual plays



THE SHRIMP GIRL

AFTER THE PICTURE BY HOGARTH IN THE NATIONAL GALLERY

many representatives of the typical Music Hall audience may be found; yet in the Halls themselves no effort is made to depart from such tried and trusted topics as drunkenness and infidelity, the disillusionments of marriage and the dark constitution of sausages, the embarrassment of twins and fleas and mothers-in-law, — the imaginary scene of trouble being always some such small mean street as Bermondsey or Kentish Town abounds in.

It is rather odd, this persistence, this unfaltering appeal to one type of bosom. It means I suppose that a visit to the Music Hall is looked upon by all as sheer recreation, and any kind of thought in even so limited a degree as would be set up by the faintest suspicion of novelty in the subject-matter of even a tuneful song would be resented. The eye and the ear alone are involved: the mind never.

The contrast between the finish and efficiency of the jugglers and acrobats and trick cyclists who perform in these Halls and the slovenly coarseness and stupidity of many of the favourite singers and sketch-actors is very noticeable. Our standard of excellence among acrobats is very high: no mistakes are allowed; but so long as a man, no matter how vile his accent, has a voice in which to bellow his triumphs of dissipation and vulgarity, or a face so made up as to indicate that what he says should be received with laughter, he may offend every refined sense and yet earn a salary equal to a Cabinet Minister's.

The essential street and tap-room humour of London may be studied to perfection in a Music Hall. London humour is essentially cruel: it rejoices never, and is merry only when someone has met with a reverse, from Death itself to the theft of a glass of bitter. It is joyless. It never laughs at nothing, out of a clear sky. It misses no discomfiture, no calamity, no shyness. It is always suspi-

cious and incredulous, always instant to reprove and accuse. Most of our street phrases indeed are invented to express either contempt or disbelief. If anyone would study the more alert and destructive street humour reproduced with something very like genius, George Robey is just now the man, and Marie Lloyd the woman. For a humaner variety, cynical to the last degree but gentle too, spoken with the Londoner's street accent at its most persuasive, Joe Elvin is the man, while for a certain happy irresponsibility of the city at its best you must go to Little Tich. I am of course treating of London's street humour only as a superficial artistic aid to life, an ameliorative element in this grey and grimy city. It is no more: it does not reflect inner character. London's heart can be only too soft, anything but cruel.

But George Robey and Marie Lloyd, Little Tich and Joe Elvin stand almost alone. The ordinary low comedian of the Halls too often has only the machinery of humour and none of its spirit. It is when one thinks of so many of them that the greatness and goodness of poor Dan Leno, for so long the best thing that the Halls could give us, becomes more than ever to be desired and regretted. In Dan Leno England lost a man of genius whose untimely and melancholy end was yet another reminder that great wits are sure to madness near allied. Not that he was precisely a great wit: rather a great droll; but great within his limits he certainly was, and probably no one has ever caused more laughter or cleaner laughter.

That was, perhaps, Dan Leno's greatest triumph, that the grimy sordid material of the Music Hall low comedian, which, with so many singers, remains grimy and sordid, and perhaps even becomes more grimy and more sordid, in his refining hands became radiant, joyous, a legitimate source

of mirth. In its nakedness it was still drunkenness, quarrelsomeness, petty poverty; still hunger, even crime; but such was the native cleanness of this little, eager, sympathetic observer and reader of life, such was his gift of showing the comic, the unexpected side, that it emerged the most delicious, the gayest joke. He might be said to have been a crucible that transmuted mud to gold.

It was the strangest contrast — the quaint, old-fashioned, half-pathetic figure, dressed in his outlandish garbs, waving his battered umbrella, smashing his impossible hat, revealing the most squalid secrets of the slums; and the resultant effect of light and happiness, laughter irresistible, and yet never for a moment cruel, never *at* anything, but always *with* it. The man was immaculate.

In this childlike simplicity of emotion which he manifested we can probably see the secret of his complete failure in New York. In that sophisticated city his genial elemental raptures seemed trivial. The Americans looked for cynicism, or at least a complete destructive philosophy — such as their own funny men have at their finger-tips — and he gave them humour not too far removed from tears. He gave them fun, that rarest of qualities, rarer far than wit or humour; and, in their own idiom, they had "no use" for it.

In the deserts of pantomime he was comparatively lost: his true place was the stage of a small Music Hall, where he could get on terms with his audience in a moment. Part of his amazing success was his gift of taking you into his confidence. The soul of sympathy himself, he made you sympathetic too. He addressed a Hall as though it were one intimate friend. He told you his farcical troubles as earnestly as an unquiet soul tells its spiritual ones. You had to share them. His perplexities became yours — he

gathered you in with his intimate and impressive "Mark you"; and you resigned yourself to be played upon as he would. The radiant security of his look told you that he trusted you, that you could not fail him. You shared his ecstasies too; and they were ecstasies!

No matter what Dan did to his face, its air of wistfulness always conquered the pigments. It was the face of a grown-up child rather than a man, with many traces upon it of early struggles. For he began in the poorest way, accompanying his parents as a stroller from town to town, and knowing every vicissitude. This face, with its expression of profound earnestness, pointed his jokes irresistibly. I recollect one song in the patter of which (and latterly his songs were mostly patter) he mentioned a firework explosion at home that carried both his parents through the roof. "I shall always remember it," he said gravely, while his face lit with triumph and satisfaction, "because it was the only time that father and mother ever went out together." That is quite a good specimen of his manner, with its hint of pathos underlying the gigantic and adorable absurdity.

Irish (of course) by extraction, his real name was George Galvin: he took Leno from his stepfather, and Dan from an inspired misprint. His first triumphs were as a clog-dancer, and he danced superbly to the end, long after his mind was partially gone. But he will be remembered as the sweetest-souled comedian that ever swayed an audience with grotesque nonsense based on natural facts.

But not even Dan Leno was to all tastes, except in the pit and gallery. It is one of the unavoidable blemishes upon the variety that governs a Music Hall entertainment, that there must be a certain section of the audience who have to endure much in order to see a little that they like. Yet there is always something that is worth seeing, always

in every Hall, however remote from the centre, one performance of strength or dexterity in which all the supple beauty of the human figure and its triumphs of patience and practice shine out. I would sit through an hour of rubbish (since one may talk and smoke, as one may not in any theatre) for five minutes of such a genius as Paul Cinquevalli; and him the Londoner may see any night when he is in town for sixpence or a shilling and have the honour of applauding the very Shakespeare of equilibrists.

It is impossible to believe that greater skill and precision than Cinquevalli's will ever be attained. For my part I cannot think that we shall ever see accomplishment so great; but even if we do, I feel certain that it will lack the alliance of such charm and distinction. It is not merely that the incomparable Paul can instantly subjugate and endow with life every article of furniture that he touches: that in a moment billiard-balls run over his back like mice, billiard-cues assume the blind obedience of sheep; it is not only this, but take away his juggling genius and there would still remain a man of compelling, arresting charm, a man visibly and fascinatingly pre-eminent. "Here is a power," one says, immediately his lithe figure enters. "Here is a power." As it happens, he goes on to prove it by neutralising the life-work of Sir Isaac Newton with exquisite grace and lightheartedness; but were he to do nothing at all — were he merely to stand there — one would be conscious of a notable personality none the less.

No one can enjoy watching a good conjurer more than I do — I mean a conjurer who produces things from nothing, not a practitioner with machinery — but a good juggler is even more interesting. The conjurer's hands alone are beautiful, whereas every line and movement of the jug-

gler's body has grace. This at least is so with Cinquevalli. As I watched him last Blake's lines kept recurring to me: —

"What immortal hand or eye
Could frame thy fearful symmetry?"

Not that Paul is a tiger, or that the words are wholly appropriate; but the law of association is the only one which I never break, and I like to put some of its freakish manifestations on record, especially as fundamentally it always has reason.

I suppose there has never been such mastery over matter as Paul Cinquevalli's. Like the great man and humorous artist that he is, he has deliberately set himself the most difficult tasks, one would have said the insuperable tasks. What, for example, is less tractable than a billiard-ball — a hard, round, polished, elusive thing, full of independence and original sin, that scarcely affords foothold for a fly, and often refuses to obey even John Roberts on a level table? But Cinquevalli will not only balance a billiard-ball on a cue, but will balance another ball on that, and will even run two together, one resting on the other, backwards and forwards between two parallel cues. This feat I am convinced is as much of a miracle as many of the things in which none of us believe. It is perfectly ridiculous, after seeing it performed by Cinquevalli, to come away with petty little doubts as to the unseen world. Everything has become possible.

With Paul one may use the word "perfection" quite comfortably, without fear of molestation. And I know I am right by an infallible test. Anything perfect moves me in the way that anything pathetic ought to do; and to watch Cinquevalli performing some of his feats is to be wrought upon to a curious and, perhaps, quite comic degree. "You beauty! You beauty!" I have caught my-



INTERIOR OF A DUTCH HOUSE

AFTER THE PICTURE BY PETER DE HOOCH IN THE NATIONAL GALLERY

self saying again and again as he conquered one difficulty after another with his charming ease. In talking about Cinquevalli to an artist — and a very level-headed artist, too — after the performance, he said, before I had mentioned this peculiarity of mine, "I must go and see him again. But the odd thing about Cinquevalli is that he always makes me cry." Then I confessed too; for after that I could have no shame in my emotion. Nor, indeed, had I before; for, to quote Blake again —

"A tear is an intellectual thing."

The Music Hall favourite's period of triumph is so short that I hesitate to mention other names in a book of this character; but I should like to set on paper some tribute to the merits of a Scotch low comedian named Harry Lauder, whose peculiar gift it is to render glee as I cannot conceive of it ever having been rendered before — so infectiously, ecstatically. Lauder has this advantage over all other comic singers now performing — that he is an actor too and a very conscientious one. He lives the song. His humour also is very racy and rich.

Whether London has reached high-water mark in frivolity, or whether new theatres and music halls are to be added to those already in full bloom, remains to be seen. The fashion for leaving home in the evening, both to eat and to be amused, to the extent now prevailing, is so new that one cannot judge. It has, indeed, almost all come about in the past ten years.

Ten years ago had anyone said that London was about to possess a circus which should hold two thousand people and fill steadily twice a day, he would have been laughed at; yet so it is. The Cranbourn Street Hippodrome, hard by Leicester Square, does this; while near it is the Coliseum, which holds three thousand people and gives

three performances a day. It began indeed by giving four, the first being from noon until two o'clock, but the discovery was made that not even the frivolous Londoner has got quite so far as that yet. Perhaps had lunch been thrown in it might have succeeded.

I went to one of these curious midday revels. The afternoon light which can meet one blindingly as one leaves the ordinary matinée in summer, is reproach enough; but it is nothing compared with the light of two o'clock which smote our eyeballs as we came away from that desolate auditorium. Desolate indeed, for nothing would take the London playgoer to the twelve o'clock performance. In vain Bible stories were presented in dumb show and galvanic action (to avoid our argus-eyed Censor) to the accompaniment of an explanatory choir; in vain the humours and excitements of Derby Day were unfolded; in vain the three stages revolved like Dervishes; — no one would go. But by half-past two London is now ready to go anywhere.

At first I was troubled about the Hippodrome. I resented its complacent disregard of equestrianism and its tendency to the Music Hall turn. I even went so far as to indite a lament. I mourned for instance over the smiling young women who thronged the Hippodrome doorways masquerading as grooms. At the doorways should be negroes; and "What makes you look so pale?" a clown should ask, ere the evening was over, of the blackest of them. And tan — what is a circus without tan? That mingled scent of horse and tan that used to meet one at the pay-box is inseparably a part of the circus fascination. But there has never been any tan at the Hippodrome, nor is it suggested for a moment that it is any more the domain of horses than of lions. A horse now and then, it is true, eludes the vigilance of the manager and finds

its way into the ring; but I have heard more than once members of the audience exchanging satisfaction upon the security from horsemanship that the Hippodrome affords, and I am certain they were expressing the feeling of the house. For any emphasis that is laid upon horses we might as well be in Venice. And yet, in spite of this slight upon the noblest of animals, the management have so little conscience and sense of right dealing that they go to the horse for their name, and call the place a Hippodrome — the word circus, it seems, having gone out of fashion. Only in the provinces, those strongholds of good sense and wise conservatisms, and in Limbo, does the word circus now cause a thrill. In London we are too clever.

"Horses bore one," say the London sightseers; which means of course that the circus is not for them at all. The circus is for a class of pure mind that is not bored, that takes with rapture everything that is offered. The circus is for the childlike, the undiscriminating, the acceptive: for the same pure minds that enjoy apple dumplings. It gives an idea of how lacking in purity of mind and simplicity the Londoner is, when I say that his is a city without a ring-master. There is a ring-master at the Hippodrome, it is true, but he wears a uniform and is a secondary, almost negligible, personage, although his name is Otho Twigg. He is a ring-servant, not master. Think of a circus without a ring-master! They used to have black hair, parted in the middle and beautifully smoothed, evening dress (even at matinées) and white gloves. The ring-master was almost one's earliest hero: the butcher perhaps came first, and then the policeman and railway guard; but the ring-master, when his hour struck, thrust these Warbecks and Simnels into impenetrable

darkness. That whip was beyond all steels, all truncheons, all bull's-eye lanterns and whistles; one would not exchange it for a sceptre. The ring-master's effulgence was superior even to the dimming influences of the clown's wit. That immortal dialogue following upon the bet of a bottle of "wine" (always "wine": what is "wine"? champagne? claret? sherry? port? — port, I suspect) that the ring-master could not answer three questions with plain yes or no: how often have I heard it and how potent it always is! The first question was anything; the second question was anything; but the third, propounded by the clown after long self-communing, was steeped in guile: "Do you *still* beat your wife?" There is no way out of that; affirmative and negative alike are powerless to rob that "still" of its sting; and off goes the clown with his bottle of wine, crack goes the whip, round ambles the old white horse with a back like Table Mountain, and the Signorina resumes her pretty capers. And to-day the ring-master is seen only for an instant, and the speaking clown not at all!

And there is another, a tenderer, loss. With the ring-master and the clown, the tan and the horses, have passed the ladies of the ring. It throws more light on the sophisticated cynical character of the Londoner when I say that he is perfectly willing to be without a dashing equestrienne. The bitter shame of it!

My indictment of the new Hippodrome practically consisted in the statement that it was not a circus. It was too good. A circus can offer poorer fare and yet by pure provincial minds be considered excellent, unsurpassable. Take, for example, the band. The Hippodrome has a band that would hardly be out of place in the Queen's Hall; but a circus needs no such refinement. It is con-

ceivable that there is a Stradivarius in the Hippodrome orchestra; but a circus bandsman can be sufficiently an Orpheus on a half-guinea cornet. And there is that painful matter of the inexpensive tan. In the country circuses it flies up now and then and dusts the front seats; and now and then a horse's hoof beats against the side of the ring with a heavy thud. All this is gone. There are no brazen discords now, no heavy thuds, no flying, aromatic tan. And no stables! It used to be a rapture to go through the stables in the interval — down the long, sloping passages, with gas jets in wire cages — and find oneself between the tails of countless piebald horses extending as far as the eye could reach. Here and there a glimpse might be caught of an acrobat or a clown, or, more exquisite sight, an equestrienne. The friendly, warm scent of those stables I can recall at this moment. Now it is no more. It used to puff out into the street and act as a more attractive invitation to the passer-by than any prismatic poster. And with it came muffled strains of the band and the crack of a whip — all combining in the latecomer to work his anticipation to intensity. These excitements are over. Cranbourn Street knows them not.

And those old, pleasant, innocent frauds are not practised there: the imposing five-barred gates that, as the horse approached them, were sloped into insignificant hurdles; the rings through which the Signorina purported to leap, but which in reality were insinuated over her by compliant attendants. And then there was that venerable jockey performance, the culmination of which was a leap from the ring to a standing position — albeit at an angle of thirty degrees — on the horse's back. In the old circuses it was the custom of the horseman to miss the culminating jump two or three times, in order that a fiercer

flame of interest might rage in the spectator. Then, when the feat succeeded, what a crash of brass and outburst of delight in the building, involving even the staff and ringmaster. Those old simple days — how far from Cranbourn Street they are!

The Hippodrome, however, steadily made its way, and one soon found that what it gave was as good as what it denied. Its standard in feats of physical skill has been very high: and that alone is much; it has brought many beautiful wild animals before our wondering eyes, including the cormorants that catch fish for the Chinese; and it introduced Londoners to Marceline. That perhaps is its greatest achievement. For that I can forgive it its disregard of circus etiquette.

I have been to the Hippodrome for half an hour again and again just to see Marceline making the children laugh. I suppose no one has made so many English children laugh as he has, except, perhaps, Dan Leno; but Dan came into children's lives only during the three months of the Drury Lane pantomime, and was then lost to them, whereas Marceline, I believe, did not miss a performance at the Hippodrome, afternoon or evening, every day, for three years. To hear children laugh is good enough, but to see them jump about is better. That is the tragic difference between children and ourselves: we all can laugh, but only children can jump up in their seats. For us these spontaneous, unconscious movements, these abandons, are no more.

I spoke just now of Dan Leno. It was with poor Dan that Marceline shared his greatest gift, his radiance. When all is said in analysis of Dan Leno's fascination I believe that his radiance will remain as his chief possession. He had radiance as a painter has light — Corot, for exam-



PORTRAIT OF A TAILOR

AFTER THE PICTURE BY MORONI IN THE NATIONAL GALLERY

ple. Dan Leno used the same words and similes, the same gestures and material, that any other low comedian might; but his radiance was his own. Marceline's radiance was his own too. It can never be acquired! one has it, or has it not.

The little man was quintessential drollery. Many funny men are funny only when they are provided with fun; but Marceline was made up of it. His appeal was as a great droll: one of those rare visitants from another planet where Irresponsibility rules who now and then come to mock our seriousness (and perhaps emphasise it). One sees but few great drolls in a lifetime. Poor Dan was one, Marceline another. Some people might include Arthur Roberts, but not I. Roberts is without simplicity; and to be a great droll it is necessary to be simple. Perhaps William Blakeley was the best natural droll that the legitimate stage has known in our time: certainly not Arthur Roberts.

Marceline might also be called the sublimation of the joyous simpleton. He carried on in his own refined, delicate way the traditions of the old zany at the fair — misunderstanding, suspecting, wondering, wool-gathering; but always joyous, always radiant, always a child. The element of wonder is essential to this kind of fun; and that is where Arthur Roberts would be at once disqualified. For him, one feels, the world has no secrets; whereas, for the genuine droll, it is new every morning. You felt that Marceline had no memory. Perhaps that is partly why he was so restful.

His movements made for restfulness, too — the quiet efficiency of them, their sure swiftness. As an acrobat he had style and grace that became irresistible. At first one saw only a ridiculous little figure with a red nose, a ginger

wig, a battered hat, and an astounding dress suit. But gradually one realised that here was a force, a master of means, a beautiful piece of human mechanism, combining with perfect, almost liquid, freedom, perfect restraint.

And then there was of course his silence; which in this world, and at this day, cannot but be fascinating and restful in the highest. Since Carlyle, no one has so eloquently advocated the gospel of silence as Marceline. But whereas Carlyle shouted, Marceline practised what he preached. He made words ridiculous, Esperanto and Volapuk a superfluity. We came away from the Hippodrome convinced that the universal language of conversation is the whistle, the universal language of menace the stamping of the feet.

Variety is not the only spice of life. There is a spice in sameness too, and when I went to see Marceline it was sameness that I wanted. I was as offended if he omitted one familiar gesture or whistle, or substituted one strange one, as a child is when you tell her again the story of Cinderella and alter the words. I wanted Marceline never to do anything new. I wanted him always to call in the attendants and cover them with ridicule before he jumped over them; I wanted him always to discover with rapture that Mr. Otho Twigg was bald, and to kiss his shining scalp; I wanted him always to treat his hat brusquely and adoringly by turns; I wanted him always to whistle and stamp his feet. It was one of my prayers that he would never speak. It was another that he would never change.

He has not been in the Hippodrome for a year. Will he ever come back?

CHAPTER VI

TRAFALGAR SQUARE AND GREAT ENGLISHMEN

London's finest site — Nelson — The French salutes — Trafalgar Day — The Steeple Jack — St. Martin's-in-the-Fields — The Gymnast — "Screevers" — Sentimental Patriotism — Partisan loyalty — A peril of predominance — London's statues — The National Portrait Gallery — A recruiting ground

OF Trafalgar Square London has every right to be proud. Here at any rate, one feels, is a genuinely national attempt at a grandiose effect. The National Gallery façade is satisfactory in its British plainness and seriousness; St. Martin's Church, with its whiteness emerging from its grime, is pure London; the houses on the east and west sides of the square are commendably rectangular and sturdy; the lions (although occupied only in guarding policemen's waterproofs) are imposing and very British: while the Nelson column is as tall and as commanding as any people, however artistic or passionately patriotic, could have made it. It is right. I am not sure but it touches sublimity. Apart, I mean, altogether from the crowning figure and all that he stands for in personal valour, melancholy and charm, and all that he symbolises: conquest itself — more than conquest, deliverance. Indeed with the idea of Nelson added, there is no question at all of sublimity; it is absolute. I like the story of the French sailors who visited London in 1905 rising to salute it as they were

driving past on their way to the West End. Would they have saluted Wellington's statue at Hyde Park Corner, I wonder? May be; but certainly not with the involuntary spontaneity that marked the Trafalgar Square demonstration. (Fortunately, exhaustive as was our hospitality, they were not taken to the grave of Sir Hudson Lowe at St. Mark's in North Audley Street.)

Every now and then the Nelson column is festooned in honour of Trafalgar Day, and for a while its impressiveness is lost. Wreaths at the foot were better. Patriotism and hero-worship, however, do not resent broken lines; and the ropes of evergreens that twine about the pillar draw thousands of people to Trafalgar Square every day. I remember the first time I saw the preparations in progress. Turning into the square from Spring Gardens, I was aware of a crowd of upturned faces watching a little black spot travelling up the pillar. It reached the top, disappeared and appeared again, waving something. It was a Steeple Jack, an intrepid gentleman from the north of England, if I recollect aright, who had the contract for the decorations, and with whom, on his descent, it was the privilege of several newspaper men to have interviews.

I was tempted after reading one of these to seek him myself, and either induce him to take me to the top with him, or hand him a commission to describe the extent of Nelson's view from that altitude, which, under the title "What Nelson Sees," would, I thought, make a seasonable and novel Trafalgar Day article. But I dared neither to converse with the living hero nor climb to the dead one, and that article is still unwritten. On a clear day Nelson must have a fine prospect to the south — not quite to his ancient element, of course, but away to the Surrey hills, and east and west along the winding river.



TRAFALGAR SQUARE

St. Martin's Church — the real name of which is St. Martin's-in-the-Fields (how far from fields to-day !) stands upon its hill as proudly almost as St. Paul's, and has not a little of St. Paul's grave dignity. From its steps many Londoners get their impression of State pageants: I was standing there when the Shah drove by some years ago on a visit to the City fathers. Among those who lie beneath this church is Nell Gwynn, and Francis Bacon was christened there.

St. Martin's spire was once used for a strictly secular purpose, when, in 1727, Violanti, an Italian acrobat, fastened one end of a rope three hundred yards long to its summit, and the other to a support in the Royal Mews beyond St. Martin's Lane, and descended upon it head foremost with his arms and legs outstretched, among the crowd being "the young princesses with several of the nobility." The pavement to the north and south used to be the canvas of two very superior "screevers" — as the men are called who make pastel drawings on paving stones. London has fewer "screevers" than it used, and latterly I have noticed among such of these artists as remain a growing tendency to bring oil paintings (which may or may not be their own work) and lean them against the wall, supplying themselves only the minimum of scroll work beneath. To such go no pennies of mine — unless of course the day is dripping wet. On a dry pavement the "screever" must show us his pictures in the making: they must, like hot rolls, be new every morning. We will have no scamping in this art.

Trafalgar Square, with Nelson and the surrounding figures of stone, notable among them the beautifully easy presentment of Gordon, brings us to the general consideration of London statues, of which there are many here and

there, although, since we are not naturally a statue-erecting or statue-valuing people, as the French are, for the most part they escape notice. Among the French, indeed, wherever you go, a livelier love of country and a more personal pride in it are to be found.

The old gibe against that nation that it has no word for home, and no true sense of home, might be met by the reminder that France itself is the home of the French in a way that England can never be called the home of the English. An Englishman's home is the world; a Frenchman's France; and he is never wearied in beautifying that home, and praising it, and keeping it homely. Such pride has he in it that there is hardly a place in the whole country without its group of statuary in honour of some brave or wise enfant of the State, which is decorated at regular intervals and whose presence is never forgotten. It is impossible to do anything for France and escape recognition and tribute. With the English, patriotism is taken for granted; but the French nourish it, tend it like a favourite flower, enjoy every fresh blossom.

It is true that on certain anniversaries we also decorate some of our statues — Beaconsfield's, Gordon's, Nelson's; but we do so, I fear, less as a people than as a party. Charles the First's statue facing Whitehall has its wreaths once a year, but they come from a small body of "Legitimists"; the new Gladstone statue in the Strand will no doubt be decorated too for a few years, but it will not be a national duty, and none of those who take primroses to Parliament Square on April 19 will be represented.

It is the manner of an Englishman not to remember — except as a partisan. Even the unveiling of the Gladstone statue in 1905, even the unveiling of a memorial to an Englishman of so commanding a personality and intel-

lectual power (apart from politics) as he, was unattended by any member of the Conservative Government, although he had been dead long enough, one would have said, to permit them to be present without confusion or loss of dignity. The incident is significant. We are all for or against.

To look neither back nor forward, to care nothing for the past and even less for the future, and to accept all benefits as one's due and hardly as a matter for thanks, is a hard habit of mind that must, I suppose, come to a dominant pre-eminent race that has for so long known no hardship or reverse or any dangerous rival. Patriotically we are like the man in the American story who had a prayer written out on the wall and made his devotions every morning by jerking his thumb at it and remarking "Them's my sentiments." Our patriotism for the most part consists in being British as much as possible, rather than in individually assisting Britain or glorying in Britain.

The danger of being at the top is that one gets into the habit of thinking of it as the only position; and that thought brings atrophy. A nation that wants to be at the top must necessarily work harder and think more and view itself more humbly than one that has long occupied that dizzy altitude. Also it must be careful to add some reward to virtue beyond virtue. In the rarified atmosphere of success one forgets the little things: certainly one forgets the necessity of celebrating the stages of one's painful climb. Hence, I think, much of our British carelessness about statues of great men. Given a loss of naval or military prestige, and relegation to a lower rank among the powers, and perhaps we should very quickly begin to be interested in our country again: a new national poetry

would emerge, new heroes would be discovered, and nothing fine would be taken for granted. I wonder. I hope so.

I have I think named all of London's statues that ever receive any attention. The others are chiefly statesmen, soldiers and kings, and may be said hardly to exist. I recall as I write Queen Anne in front of St. Paul's and again at her beautiful gate by St. James's Park; George I on the top of the spire in Bloomsbury; George II in Golden Square; George III in a little scratch wig on a prancing horse at the east end of Pall Mall; George IV, riding without stirrups, and visibly uncomfortable, in Trafalgar Square; James I (looking too much like Mr. Forbes Robertson the actor) behind the New War Office; Queen Elizabeth on the wall of St. Dunstan's-in-the-West; Mary Queen of Scots for some reason or other on a new façade in Fleet Street; Queen Victoria, by Blackfriars Bridge, standing, and in Kensington Gardens, seated; Cromwell in the shelter of Westminster Hall, very nigh the replaced bauble; Richard Cœur de Lion, splendidly warlike, on his horse, by the House of Lords; the Duke of York of discreditable memory on his column in Waterloo Place, doing all he can by his sheer existence to depreciate the value of the national tribute to Nelson close by; Wellington at Hyde Park Corner and again before the Stock Exchange; Havelock in Trafalgar Square; Captain Coram by his Foundling Hospital; Shakespeare in the middle of Leicester Square, within hail of the Empire and the Alhambra, and again, with Chaucer and Milton, in Hamilton Place; Milton outside St. Giles's, Cripplegate; Robert Burns in the Embankment Gardens; Lord Strathnairn at Knightsbridge; Boadicea in her chariot on Westminster Bridge; Darwin, Huxley, Owen and Banks in the Natural History Museum; William Pitt, a gigantic figure, in Hanover



PORTRAIT OF A YOUNG SCULPTOR

AFTER THE PAINTING BY ANDREA DEL SARTO IN THE NATIONAL GALLERY

Square; Charles James Fox in Russell Square and at Holland House; Carlyle in Chelsea; Sir Hugh Myddelton in Islington Green; Canning (who has a sparrow's nest under his arm every spring) in Parliament Square; Cobden in Camden Town; Sir Robert Peel (in profile very like Lamb) in Cheapside; Lord Herbert of Lea opposite the War Office; Cardinal Newman by the Brompton Oratory; John Wesley opposite Bunhill Fields; George Stephenson at Euston; Sir John Franklin in Waterloo Place, near several Crimean heroes; Byron, seated, in Hamilton Gardens, and in relief in St. James's Street and again in Holles Street; and Prince Albert, unnamed and unrecognised in Holborn Circus, and again, all gold, in Kensington Gardens, seated beneath a canopy not without ornamentation. This, though far from complete, may be called a good list; and I doubt if there are many Londoners who could have supplied from memory half of it.

Indoor collections of statues and busts are to be seen in the Abbey, in St. Paul's, in the National Portrait Gallery and the Tate Gallery, in the Houses of Parliament and the British Museum; while the façade of the Institute of the Society of Painters in Water Colours in Piccadilly has a fine row of the masters in that medium — De Wint and David Cox, Girtin and Turner, for example; and the new Birkbeck Bank, off Chancery Lane, has a rich assortment of reliefs of illustrious intellects, including Hazlitt and Bessemer, Leonardo da Vinci and Charles Lamb. On the roof of Burlington House, again, are many artists.

To the National Gallery in Trafalgar Square we shall return later; but after my digression on statues and the English pride or want of pride in their great men, this is the time to enter the National Portrait Gallery, hard

by, where pictures of most of the nation's principal sons since the days when painters first got to work among us (less than a poor four hundred years ago, so modern is our culture,) may be studied. In masterpieces the gallery is not rich — nor need it be, for the interest is rather in the sitter than in the artist — yet it has many very fine portraits (quite a number of Reynolds', for example), a few superlatively fine, and not many wholly bad. Taken as a whole it is a very worthy collection, and one of which England has every reason to be proud. A composite photograph of each group of men here would make an interesting study, and it might have significance to a Lavater — unless, of course, the painters have lied.

Some of the best and most interesting portraits are in Room XXV, which is the first room to take seriously as one climbs the building, where sailors, soldiers and authors grace the walls. Here is Füger's unfinished head of Nelson, doomed and sad and lovable; Danloux's Viscount Duncan on the bridge of his vessel; Sir Joshua's Admiral Keppel; a flaming Lord Heathfield by Copley; Wolfe as a youth, and again, with his odd lean face, as a general; Landseer's sketch of Walter Scott without a dog, and Allan's Walter Scott in his study with his dog asleep; Laurence's large full face of Thackeray, above the ingratiating bust of the great novelist as a schoolboy; Romney's Cowper; and Sargent's Coventry Patmore, that astonishingly vital and distinguished work. Here also, still in Room XXV, are a number of George Frederick Watts's great contemporaries painted by himself and presented by him to the nation; but these I have never been able to admire or believe in quite as I should like to.

Among the famous portraits in the first floor rooms — Nos. XIV–XXI — are Barry's unfinished sketch of Dr.

Johnson, so grim and mad; Reynolds' Goldsmith and Burke; Hickel's vast and rural Charles James Fox; Arthur Pond's Peg Woffington in bed; Phillips' rapt Blake; Stuart's Woollett the engraver: Romney's family of Adam Walker, and Lady Hamilton (one of how many?); Rossetti's chalk drawing of his mother and sister; and some magnificent self-painted portraits of great artists not inferior to many in the Uffizi — notably Romney, very sad; Sir Joshua, in the grand manner; Joseph Wright; and that very interesting craftsman, John Hamilton Mortimer, in a picture that might hang as a pendant to one recently presented to the Diploma Gallery at Burlington House. Elsewhere is a fine Van Dyck by himself.

Ascending to the top floor we recede to Augustan, Stuart and Tudor periods. Here are Hogarth's Lord Lovat; Kneller's Sarah Jennings, Duchess of Marlborough; Van Ceulen's William III as a boy, very sweet and pensive, and the same artist's Earl of Portland; Gheeraedts' Queen Elizabeth and the famous Countess who was Sidney's sister, Pembroke's mother; Zucchero's James VI of Scotland and I of England, as a child with a hawk; Van Dyck's children of Charles I; Mierevelt's Queen of Bohemia ("Ye meaner beauties of the night"); Sadler's Bunyan in middle age, with dangerous little red eyes; Lefebvre's Isaac Barrow, that lean divine; Lely's Flaxman; and a putative but very interesting Mary Queen of Scots. I mention these because they seem to stand out; because technically they catch the eye; but the most interesting men often are the worst painted, as for example the author of "Hamlet" and "Love's Labour's Lost," who in his portrait here, the "Chandos" as it is called, looks incapable of writing either work, or indeed of doing anything more subtle than acquiring wealth as a sober unambitious merchant,

sitting on the bench among the unpaid, or propping the Establishment in the capacity of church-warden.

On the ground floor are some very interesting electrotypes of recumbent figures of Kings and Queens from the tombs in the Abbey. Here also is Bacon seated in his chair, from the great chancellor's tomb at St. Albans, and a little Darnley kneeling to his ill-fated queen. The two death masks of Cromwell, more unlike than they ought to be, should be noticed, and one of Thomas Carlyle, very different from Boehm's bust which stands near it.

The pavement between the corner of Trafalgar Square and the National Portrait Gallery has long been appropriated by the War Office as London's chief recruiting ground; and here you may see the recruiting sergeants peacocking up and down, flicking their legs with their little canes, throwing out their fine chests, and personifying with all their might the allurements of the lordliest life on earth. One has to watch but a very short time to see a shy youth, tired of being an errand boy or grocer's assistant, grab at the bait; when off they go to the barracks behind the National Gallery to complete the business. Is it, one wonders, another Silas Tomkyns Comberbatch? Not often.

CHAPTER VII

THE NATIONAL GALLERY AND THE ITALIAN MASTERS

I ONCE startled and embarrassed a dinner table of artists and art critics by asking which was the best picture in the National Gallery. On my modifying this terrible question to the more human form, "Which picture would you choose if you might have but one?" and limiting the choice to the Italian masters, the most distinguished mind present named at once Tintoretto's "Origin of the Milky Way." One could understand the selection, so splendid in vigour and colouring and large audacity is this wonderful work; but it would never be my choice to live with. Another, an artist, also without hesitation, chose Titian's "Bacchus and Ariadne"; and I can understand that too, but that also would not be my choice. After very long consideration I have come to the conclusion that mine would be Francesca's "Nativity." Take it for all in all I am disposed to think that Francesca's "Nativity" appeals to me as a work of companionable beauty and charm before any Italian picture in the National Collection.

Piero della Francesca was born about 1415, and died in 1492, and we may assume him to have painted this picture in the height of his powers — say about 1450. It is thus three and a half centuries old. In other words it was in existence, exercising its sweet spell on those that saw it, while Henry VI was on our throne, a hundred years before

Shakespeare was born. The picture is unfinished and in not the best preservation, but its simplicity and sincerity and beauty are unharmed. The reproduction (on the opposite page) is necessarily small and, as in the case of all process blocks of great works, only a reminder of the original; but it conveys the exquisite grace of Mary's attitude. The little birds which Francesca's sweet thoughtfulness painted in must be looked for in the picture itself.

But all this talk of one's favourite picture is futile: because there are so many others that one would not really do without. Perhaps no picture is steadily one's favourite — at any rate in the National Gallery, where there is no "Monna Lisa." Better to confess to a favourite in each room, or a favourite for every mood. There are days, for example, when I cannot drag myself from Bronzino's "Allegory"; days when Cosimo's "Warrior" draws me to it continually; days when warm colour reigns and Titian's "Madonna and Child," and Perugino's altar piece, and Bellini's "Agony in the Garden" seem the best; days when masterly quietude seems best, when Andrea del Sarto's "Sculptor" and Veronese's "St. Helena" and Velasquez's "Admiral" exercise the strongest sway; days when drawing seems more than all, when Michael Angelo's "Entombment" becomes the most wonderful achievement of the human hand.

One feels in the National Gallery, as in all large collections of pictures, that one would like it to be smaller — to contain only the best. Not more of its greatest men — that would perhaps be asking too much — but less of its lesser men. Or a system of segregation would meet the case, by which the greatest were kept together and were no longer, as now, neighboured by the lesser men. Lorenzo di Credi for example would disappear from Room I, where



THE NATIVITY

AFTER THE PICTURE BY PIERO DELLA FRANCESCA IN THE NATIONAL GALLERY

Michael Angelo and Botticelli and Cosimo and Bronzino and Filippino Lippi and Andrea del Sarto hang; Beltraffio and several of his companions would recede from Room IX, with its Leonardo and its Correggios. Lorenzo di Credi and Beltraffio were both masters; but they are far from the highest rank.

The official catalogue is by no means an easy one to follow. It is in two volumes, one for Foreign Schools and one for British, and each is alphabetical. For the purposes of quiet study at home it is excellent, a model of its kind; but in the gallery it is a vexation, especially as it often happens that the painter is catalogued under his less-known name. I propose to consider the pictures as one comes to them in a walk through the Gallery from room to room in numerical order.

Entering Room I — dedicated to the Tuscan School — the first picture on which the eye will probably rest is in some ways the most remarkable picture in the gallery, Bronzino's Allegory, "Venus, Cupid, Time and Folly" (No. 651). You will seek in vain in the other rooms for anything so vivid, so exultantly masterly, so brilliant in drawing, as this. Its preservation is marvellous: it must be just as alive as it was when three and a half centuries ago Bronzino painted it. Beautiful in the highest sense it is not: the bodies are too restless and exaggerated in pose; its greatness lies in the drawing, the sense of power, and the joyous vitality of it all. For another side of this painter's genius — his quiet sympathetic painting of men and women — look at No. 649, "Portrait of a Boy," so grave and gentle and fine. The painter of "The Death of Procris," No. 698, on the left of the Allegory, the picture which probably next takes the eye and holds it — Piero di Cosimo, may also, like Bronzino, be studied in two

moods in this room, for not only has he this beautiful work — Theocritus in colour — all so simple and true and sad, but on the opposite wall, in the corner, is his "Portrait of a Warrior in Armour," which I have already referred to as one of the most satisfying pictures here. We find great drawing again, and again a pagan inspiration, in the pendant to Piero's picture on the other side of Bronzino's Allegory, the "Mars and Venus," No. 915, of Botticelli: but it is a tenderer hand than Bronzino's that traced this Venus; not less sure, but substituting for the splendour of his vigour an almost northern melancholy. Of all the Old Masters, as we indiscriminately call the Italians, none is so modern as this Sandro Botticelli, whom the catalogue knows as Filipepi. Him also we can study in this room in another mood, for, also on the opposite wall, hangs one of the tenderest, most wistful, of his Madonnas — No. 782 — perhaps the saddest mother and child ever painted. And with this picture we come to sacred subjects, which are supposed by the rapid generaliser to be all that these old masters ever thought of. It is rather interesting, I think, that the first three pictures from their hands to catch the eye in this great and representative collection should have had a mythological theme.

Botticelli also has in this room, immediately on the right as one enters, a fascinatingly real "Portrait of a Young Man," which, once seen, is never forgotten. Close by it is a beautiful angel, in tempera, by this painter's most impressionable pupil, Filippino Lippi (son of Botticelli's master, Fra Lippo Lippi). We come now, next the three mythological pictures I have mentioned, to one of the most famous and exquisite of all our national treausres — Andrea del Sarto's "Portrait of a Young Sculptor" (long thought to be himself), which is almost the last word in quietude and

distinction. On the other side of the doorway leading into Room III we find the faultless painter (as he was called) in a mood for richer colour, for here is one of his soft and lovely "Holy Families." Above the "Young Sculptor" is a Fra Lippo Lippi — No. 589, "The Virgin Mary Seated, an Angel presenting the Infant Christ to her," a very sweet and simple picture, hanging beside the only work of another great monkish painter that we possess — Fra Bartolommeo's "Virgin and Child."

After Bronzino's portraits comes the first of Filippino Lippi's adorable Virgins: a slip of a girl he always made her, with a high innocent forehead, and her hair combed back from it, and just a hint of perplexity mixed with the maternal composure which she has managed to assume, accepting her great fate very naturally. Sweetest of all is perhaps the Madonna in his "Virgin and Child with St. Jerome and St. Dominic" — No. 293 in this room — although more human is, I think, No. 1412 in Room III. Of the two Lorenzo di Credis, close by, I am doubtful: they seem to me, however charming in their gladness, too shallow to be right; but one has no doubts as to the greatness of Allori's "Portrait of a Lady," No. 21; nor of the magic freshness — all the youth of the Renaissance in it — of the anonymous picture of the "Angel Raphael and Tobias," No. 781 — in which the angel moves with the lightness of thistledown. The anonymous "Virgin and Child with two Angels" — No. 296 — which hangs next also has great charm.

And then, having passed Pollaiuolo's great "St. Sebastian," we come to what is in some ways the most majestic work of art in the gallery — Michael Angelo's "Entombment of Our Lord," No. 790, before which one stands amazed, such power is there in it, such a mastery of diffi-

culties — difficulties of foreshortening which the giant created for himself for sheer joy of overcoming them. The other Michael Angelo, which also is unfinished, "The Madonna and Infant Christ, St. John the Baptist and Angels," No. 809, is less compelling but technically hardly less wonderful. Of neither picture can one ever tire; while the Entombment makes almost everything else seem a little too facile.

On the other side of the door leading into Room II we find another Filippino Lippi — richer in colour than was usual with him — the "Adoration of the Magi," No. 592, while close by he treats the same subject again — in No. 1124 — which is full of quaint and pretty carefulness and fancy. And above is his father's subdued and beautiful "Vision of St. Bernard." Between them is a strong and realistic but not very pleasing "Procession to Calvary" by Ridolfo del Ghirlandaio. Botticelli's very quaint and archaic "Nativity," No. 1034; his mournful "Madonna and Child," No. 782, with the beautiful landscape, to which I have referred and which is reproduced opposite page 218, and Piero de Cosimo's "Warrior," are all that remain.

Room II is perhaps the sweetest in the whole Gallery — for here is Fra Angelico, here is a simple piety untouched by worldliness. Here also Browning's readers, who stood before Andrea del Sarto's work in Room I, will find the other great painting monologist monk and genius and lover, Fra Filippo Lippi, teacher of Botticelli, and father (by Lucrezia Buti, bride of Christ, whom his duty was to help towards sanctity) of Filippino Lippi, a greater painter than himself, whose darling Madonnas we have seen. One recognises the type in the father's pictures, but Filippino perfected it. Fra Filippo Lippi's great pictures in Room II are No. 666, "The Annunciation," and No. 667 "St.

John the Baptist with Other Saints." But it is to Fra Angelico that Room II really belongs — to the painter of No. 663 — "Christ and the Heavenly Host," so simple and sweet, and filled with such adorable little people. The other Fra Angelico is quite small — an "Adoration of the Magi," No. 582, but it is very right. Here also is the "Virgin and Child Enthroned," by his pupil Benozzo Gozzoli. This picture, though not the equal of Francesca's "Nativity," has much sweetness and simplicity; and the little goldfinches again are not forgotten. Gozzoli is the painter also of the very artless and quaint "Rape of Helen" (No. 591), in which we see Helen, the world's desire, for whom Trojan and Greek blood was to run like water, perched, a cheery little innocent romp, on the shoulders of her captor. The other pictures in this room which I would mention are No. 1155, Matteo di Giovanni's spirited "Assumption," a very heartening if rather artificial work; No. 1331, the "Virgin and Child" of Bernadino Fungai, with its lovely grave colours; and No. 227, by an unknown painter of the fifteenth century, "St. Jerome in the Desert" — once an altar piece at Fiesole — which I always like for the little kneeling girl with the red cap.

The third room, which is purely Tuscan again, is famous for its circular Botticelli, No. 275, "The Virgin and Child, St. John the Baptist and an Angel," a picture which is found in reproduction in so many of the houses of one's friends to-day. Here also is perhaps the most darling of Filippino Lippi's darling Virgins, nursing a little human Christ busy with a pomegranate, and a little St. John beside him. "Great destinies may be in store for us, the little Christ seems to be saying: "yes; but meanwhile here is a pomegranate." Of a very different quality, un-

like anything else in the collection, is Ucello's "Battle of Sant' Egidio," No. 583, a decorative scene of colour and animation, the curious grave harmony of which I suppose has never been surpassed. Its charm is however quite incommunicable: it must be seen, and seen again and again. I visit it, whenever I go to the National Gallery, both on entering and on leaving. Above it hangs a famous work by an unknown Tuscan — "Venus reclining with her Cupids," Botticellian in influence and very masterly. Opposite is the largest Botticelli in the gallery, and not altogether a happy one, I think — "The Assumption of the Virgin," No. 1126 — for this was a painter who ought never to have crowded his canvas or to have painted small. The lilies springing from the tomb make it memorable: these and the distant view of Florence the beautiful. But personally I would rather have his "Portrait of a Young Man" just inside Room I. Among the other minor portraits in the National Gallery one of the most fascinating is No. 1230, here, — the "Portrait of a Girl" by Domenico del Ghirlandaio. To this quiet Italian face I return again and again. We are weak in the National Gallery in Ghirlandaio's work: we own only this portrait and one other near it, a boy: nothing to compare with the Louvre's treasures. One other picture I would mention, No. 701, by Justus of Padua, a small tryptich which I like for the little woman at a wash tub in one corner.

With Room IV we journey north for a while and come to hints of domesticity and a homelier landscape — for Room IV belongs to the early Flemish masters. The cheerful piety of Francesca and Fra Angelico, and the sheer love of innocent beauty of Botticelli and Filippino Lippi, are no more. A note of sadness has come in, a northern earnest-



THE ENTOMBMENT

AFTER THE PICTURE BY ROGIER VAN DER WEYDEN IN THE NATIONAL GALLERY

ness, and also the beginning of a realistic interest in humanity. The full materialism of later Netherlandish art is not yet: there is still much left of the rapt religious spirit; but these early Flemish painters have an eye on this world too. It is in their minds that living men and women deserve painting as much as the hierarchy of heaven. We find realism at its most extreme in No. 944, the "Two Usurers" of Marinus van Romerswael, a miracle of minuteness without compensating allurement of any kind. Joachim Patinir introduces us to domestic landscape in Nos. 1084 and 1082, both incidents in the life of the Virgin but more interesting for their backgrounds of fairy-tale scenery, busy with romantic Chaucerian happenings. Even more remarkable as innovation is No. 1298, from the same hand, one of the most exquisite pieces of colour in the whole collection — a river scene frankly, and nothing else, painted four hundred years ago. This Patinir, whose work is not often to be seen, was a friend of Dürer, who painted his portrait and no doubt encouraged him. The three portraits by Mabuse, or Jan Gossaert — Nos. 656 and 946 and 1689 — all show his great and rare power; No. 654, "The Magdalen Reading," possibly by a follower of Rogier Van der Weyden, draws the eye continually by its sweet gravity. For Van der Weyden himself look at No. 664, "The Deposition in the Tomb" (reproduced on the opposite page), a beautiful work lacking nothing of the true religious feeling, a feeling that is noticeable again with no diminution in the "Virgin and Infant Christ Enthroned in a Garden," No. 686, by Hans Memling, one of the greatest of the Flemings. But the greatest of all, and also one of the earliest, was the painter of No. 186, that amazing achievement of human skill, that portrait of Jean and Jeanne Arnolfini from which sprang half the Dutch school.

Earliest and best; for no later painter ever surpassed this forerunner panel, in precision, in colour or in sincerity. "Johannes de Eyck fuit hic 1434" is its inscription. I give a reproduction opposite page 234, but the picture must be seen if its fascination is really to be felt. Greater minds than Van Eyck's may have arisen in the Netherlands — Rembrandt's for example; deeper minds — Quintin Matsys' and Memling's, for example; broader minds — Van Dyck's for example; but never a more interesting one. I look upon Van Eyck's pencil drawing of St. Barbe, in the Antwerp Museum, as one of the most beautiful of the works of man; and this picture that we are standing before at this moment, and the Virgin and Child with a saint at the Louvre, with its wonderful river and town scene below the ramparts and children peeping over, could have been painted only by one who loved his fellow-men and to whom the world was new every morning. Room IV when all is said is Van Eyck's. Before leaving it I would draw attention to some of the pictures by unknown painters, particularly to No. 653, portraits of a man and his wife, very masterly; to No. 943, a portrait of a man; to Nos. 1078 and 1079, which are very interesting; and lastly to the fascinating portrait of a lady, No. 1433.

Room V, belonging to the Ferrarese and Bolognese schools, interests me very little. It does not seem quite genuine, and it comes badly after Room IV and before Room VI. I am left cold by Cosimo Tura, by Grandi, and for the most part by Tisio, although his "Madonna and Child Enthroned," No. 671, is very sweet; but how far from the humble spirit of Room II have we travelled! (We shall however travel farther soon, for we are coming to the Venetians; yet the Venetians had more to offer in its place.) Even Francia, before whose "Virgin and two

angels weeping over the dead body of Christ," No. 180, one of the best-known pictures in the National Gallery, reverent spectators are always to be seen — even Francia I find myself doubting. I do not seem to see genuine piety in this picture, nor does its technique touch me. I like his No. 179 better, but it has a kind of repellent perfection. The other Francia (or Raibolini, as he is in the catalogue), No. 638, has a fine colour. The L'Ortolano on the opposite wall is powerful and interesting, with some almost Dutch detail in it; but the most interesting picture of all in this room is perhaps No. 1217, the curious little treatment of "The Israelites gathering Manna."

Room I taken as a whole is to me the most interesting and beautiful room in the Gallery, but many persons would place Room VI higher — for its Raphaels. Here however we should part company, for at the National Gallery Raphael with all his angelic perfection does not quite seize me. One of his pictures there indeed I think I dislike actively — the "St. Catherine"; while the more than beautiful "Madonna degli Ansidei" does not touch me as say Filippini Lippi's similar subject does in Room I — the picture reproduced opposite page 200. In fact the Raphaels that I find most pleasing here are the little and wholly captivating "Vision of a Knight," No. 213, and the small Madonna and Children, No. 774. For Raphael in London I would always go to South Kensington, where the cartoons are.

To my mind the most attractive treasures of Room VI are the Francescas, the Peruginos, and Ridolfo del Ghirlandaio's "Portrait of a Gentleman" — one of our borrowed treasures. Of Francesca's "Nativity" I have already spoken, but would say here that almost chief among the old masters would it gain by being taken from its gold

and framed in black. The gilt frame convention needs breaking down mercilessly again and again in this collection, but most of all, I think, in the case of this picture. Here also is Francesca's "Baptism of Christ in the Jordan," No. 665 — on the other side of the door leading from Room V — which is in its way, though not more ingratiating, more remarkable even than the "Nativity." Surely never did dove so brood before: nor — to take a purely technical point, disregarding the spirit of the work — not even in modern realistic art has any man ever so divested himself of his shirt as the figure in the background. And the sweetness of the whole, and the lovely colouring of it!

Most conspicuous of the Peruginos is the famous Altar Piece, of which I give a reproduction (but how tame!) opposite page 222 — "The Virgin Adoring the Infant Christ." This picture is notable not only for its beauty and mastery, but for being the first joyous exultation in pure colour which we have seen. The picture burns into the mind: to think of Room VI is to feel its warmth and content. Incidentally one might say that there are no more charming boys in any Renaissance work of art than this Michael and this Tobias. Other pictures by Perugino (whom the catalogue knows as Vannucci) are his faint and lovely fresco "The Adoration of the Shepherds," which one might say had lent all its own colour to the great tryptich, and No. 181, the very sweet little "Virgin and Christ with the infant St. John," who is always a sweet figure, but here the solidest little boy in Italian art. The baby Christ plays very prettily with his mother's finger. Ridolfo del Ghirlandaio's portrait on the screen, so quiet and persuasive and believable-in, is only a loan — one of the many generous loans of Mr. George Salting, among the others being a curious portrait of Costanza de' Medici by the

greater Ghirlandaio, a terrible head of Salome by Luciani, a nobleman by Cariani and a girl's head by Francia.

Among other pictures in this room that I would name are Bertucci's "Glorification of the Virgin," No. 282, with the two cherubs beneath, before whom all mothers always pause and murmur a little; Luca Signorelli's fascinatingly low-toned allegory, "The Triumph of Chastity," No. 910, with the wonderful moving procession at the back and the spirit of the Renaissance almost vocal in it; the curious Griselda series, so rich in colour and quaint in incident and character; the extraordinarily interesting and modern Pinturicchio — No. 911, "The Return of Ulysses to Penelope"; the "Annunciation," No. 1104, by Giannicola Manni — a picture which by its individual colour scheme and cool spaces attracts the eye immediately one enters the room, even although the great Perugino is close by; Pinturicchio's adorable "Madonna and Child" — No. 703 — one of the sweetest pictures in the Gallery; Santo's "Madonna and Child," No. 751; and Luca Signorelli's great "Nativity," No. 1133.

In Room VII we come frankly and completely to the men of the world — to the Venetians: great masterful gentlemen who painted for the Doge rather than for Heaven. Occasionally they took a religious subject, but they brought little religion to it. Colour came first. Only in one work here — and that a very little picture on a screen — do I find more than a little trace of the simple piety that surrounded us in Room II: the "Crucifixion" of Antonella di Messina, No. 1166. One is doubtful even of Bellini. Even with him one feels paint came first. But we must not let this disturb us: is not paint in the thing?

The greatest names in the Venetian room are Titian and Tintoretto, Bellini and Moroni, Giorgione and Cima,

Moretto and Paolo Veronese, Sebastian del Piombo and Catena. I suppose the glories of the room are Tintoretto's "Origin of the Milky Way" and Titian's "Bacchus and Ariadne," although Charles Lamb would, I feel sure, still remain faithful to No. 1, Piombo's "Raising of Lazarus" in which Michael Angelo was thought to have a hand and which is the picture that began the National Gallery. The Tintoretto seems to me the rarest work of art here — the most amazing, the least copyable; but its appeal is not simple. Titian's Bacchus is simpler and more gorgeous; but I always feel that this Tintoretto transcends it. Comparisons are odious: it is better to delight in both. The National Gallery is strong in Titian: it has his "Holy Family," his "Bacchus and Ariadne," his "Madonna and Child" (the blue of the mountains in the distance!), the new portrait of Aretino. Of Titian, the glorious, the gorgeous, one cannot have too much; but I should hesitate to say the same of Paolo Veronese, who when he is painting his vast panoramic efforts always suggests the contributor to the Salon carried out to his highest power. His "Saint Helena" (reproduced opposite page 156) is to me one of the most beautiful of pictures, but I grudge some of his square yards.

If one had to name the most charming pictures in this room I should pick out Giovanni Bellini's "Infant Christ and the Virgin," No. 599, on one of the screens (a reproduction of which will be found on the opposite page) and Giorgione's "Knight in Armour," No. 269, on another screen. Bellini is always interesting, always the consummate craftsman, always intelligent and distinguished. His finest picture here is, I think, "Christ's Agony in the Garden," No. 726, which is indescribably wonderful in colour and almost escapes the Venetian worldliness; his most modern



VIRGIN AND CHILD

AFTER THE PICTURE BY BELLINI IN THE NATIONAL GALLERY

painting, which might almost have proceeded from a London or Parisian studio to-day, is his "St. Dominic," No. 1440, with its decorative ingenuity; but his most charming picture is undoubtedly this "Virgin and Child." The Virgin's face is a little commonplace but very human: the Infant Christ is the sleepiest baby I ever saw: the landscape and fleeting fine-weather clouds could not be more smiling and delightful. The work is adorably gay and masterly in every touch. I have however found many mothers who prefer his No. 280; but they are wrong. The little Giorgione (or Barbarelli, as the catalogue calls him) once hung on the wall of Samuel Rogers, the poet, in St. James's Place. It is one of the pictures one would certainly hasten to carry off if London fell into the hands of an enemy and looting set in. One could carry it easily.

To two other painters I would draw attention in this room: both portrait painters, Moroni and Moretto. Moroni is well represented, and I have, I think, chosen his best picture for reproduction: "The Tailor," No. 697. I never tire of this melancholy Italian bending over his cloth, whom one seems to know better than many of one's living acquaintance. His "Portrait of an Italian Nobleman" — No. 1316 — I should put next — so superb and distinguished is it, so interesting a harmony of black and grey. (Surely Velasquez must have seen it.) Comparable with it is the "Italian Nobleman," No. 1025, by Moretto (whom the catalogue calls Bonvicino), another of the great portraits.

Among other pictures to which I return again are No. 636, Palma's "Portrait of a Poet"; No. 1105, Lotto's "Portrait of the Protonotary" with its curious Surrey common vista; No. 1455, Bellini's "The Circumcision," glorious in colour: No. 234, Catena's "Warrior adoring the Infant Christ," a large rich picture with a lovely

evening glow and real simplicity in it: Cima's "Incredulity of St. Thomas," No. 816, with a very charming un-Italian landscape, that Crome might have painted, seen through the left window; No. 173, Jacopo da Ponte's "Portrait of a Gentleman"; No. 1141, a head by Antonella di Messina; No. 1160, a very beautiful little Giorgione; No. 1450, a sombre Piombo; and Romanino's very rich tryptich.

In Room VIII we find earlier Venetian and Paduan painters — chief of them the great Andrea Mantegna, for whose work in England, however, Hampton Court is the place. He is represented at the National Gallery by a very beautiful "Virgin and Child with St. John the Baptist and the Magdalene," No. 274; by the amazing "Triumph of Scipio," in monochrome, a masterpiece of psychological painting; and by the "Agony in the Garden," curiously like Bellini's in the next room, and perhaps stronger but far less superficially attractive. The painter who is represented here most fully is Carlo Crevelli, in whom I seem to see more ingenuity than greatness, but who certainly drew divinely and made very interesting pictures. All his work bears careful scrutiny, as he had an engaging fancy; but beside Mantegna he is mere confectionery. The painter here whom one loves best is Vittore Pissano — for the sheer joy of his "St. Anthony and St. George," so gay and pretty, and the gentle simplicity of his "Vision of St. Eustace."

Room IX — Schools of Lombardy and Parma — seems to me to contain a larger proportion of pictures not of the first rank than any other; but the fault is atoned for by its two great masterpieces — Leonardo da Vinci's "Virgin of the Rocks" and Correggio's "Mercury teaching Cupid in the presence of Venus," reproduced opposite page 206. Any room with these two pictures in it is in a position to

laugh at criticism. "The Virgin of the Rocks" is the only Leonardo in the National Gallery: the Louvre is far richer, for it has not only a counterpart of this picture, but also the "Monna Lisa"; but London has the "Holy Family" in the Diploma Gallery, which I reproduce opposite page 294, and there is nothing anywhere more lovely than that. Of the "Virgin of the Rocks" I have nothing to say. It is — and that is all. Correggio (whom the catalogue calls Allegri) is represented by three pictures, of which No. 10 is the jewel. I know of no painting of the nude which so grows on one as this: its power, its soft maturity, its charm. It becomes daily more and more beautiful; the little figure of Cupid becomes more and more roguish. Another neighbouring picture which I would mention here is No. 1350, an unknown "Virgin and Child," with its curiously modern and worldly but very charming Virgin. Among the other painters in this room, the greatest is perhaps Borgognone, who made beautiful true things; and here also are Boccaccino, and De Solario and Luini, but you must go to the Wallace Collection for the last.

The Octagonal Hall, between Rooms IV, VIII, IX and XV, completes the collection of old Italian pictures: for the later Italians we must wait till the next chapter. The largest works here are a series of four allegories by Paolo Veronese, all of which are amazing in their bold drawing, and one at least, "Unfaithfulness," has a fine distinction in its colouring. The most attractive of the four is the "Scorn," but none really can be entitled companionable. They prove, however, the greatness of the man. Here also is another Bellini — No. 1235, "The Blood of the Redeemer" — with its quaint little kneeling angel; two grave and richly coloured saints by Girolama da Santa Croce; a rather fascinating girl's head by Bissolo; and two charming

scenes in the legend of Trajan and the Widow by an unknown painter of the Veronese school. But the most remarkable pictures to my mind are the three scenes in the life of Christ by Francesco Mantegna, the son of the great Andrea, especially Nos. 1381 and 639, which are full of interest and charm. Their light is beautiful. The two portraits on the same screen are interesting too; and on the other screen is a pretty Francesco Morone.

CHAPTER VIII

THE NATIONAL GALLERY AND THE NORTHERN PAINTERS

IT is at the doorway of Room X — our backs to the Leonardo and the Correggio in Room IX — that divinity leaves us. There will be great art in the remaining rooms: high seriousness and distinction; but nothing like Leonardo. We are about to awake from our dream of heaven in the warm south and open our eyes in a northern world of men and women. Between these two sections of the National Gallery — the old Italians and the Northerners — there should be a cooling chamber, as at a Turkish Bath, or else one should begin at the other end, at Room XXII, and finish at Room I. Yes, that is what one should do. It is all wrong to follow art chronologically from its fount to recent days: the true progress is from recent days to its fount, from complexity to simplicity, from sophistication to piety. Or better still, perhaps, one should not combine the north and the south in one visit at all, but confine each visit to a single group.

I hope I shall not be misunderstood about Dutch art, for which I have the greatest admiration. What I mean is that there is no preparation for a loving appreciation of it so unsuitable as the contemplation of the old Italian masters. No emotional student of the Umbrians and the Venetians, no one whose eyes have just been filled with their colour and glory, is in a fit state to understand the dexterity and

homeliness of Gerard Dou and Terburg, De Hooch and Jan Steen, the austere distinction of Van Dyck, or even the stupendous power of Rembrandt. Least of all is he able to be fair to Peter Paul Rubens. A different attitude is expected by Italian masters and the northern masters: the Italians ask for wonder, delight; the Dutch for curiosity, almost inquisitiveness. It is the difference between rapture and interest. Always, however, excepting Rembrandt: he stands alone.

With Room X we say goodbye to religion. Tuscans, Umbrians, Ferrarese, Parmese, Lombardians, Sienese — these found in the Scriptures their principal sources of inspiration; these painted the Holy child, the Virgin Mary and the blessed company of saints, with a persistence which I for one cannot too much admire and rejoice in. Looking to Rome and Romish patrons for their livelihood, they had little choice, more particularly in the earlier days when simplicity was in their very blood, nor would they have wished a wider field. We may say, at any rate of the Tuscans and Umbrians and Sienese, that their colours were mixed and their panels made smooth for the glory of their Lady. But in Room X we are among painters whose art was the servant of the State rather than the Church. Farewell to mild Madonnas and chubby Christs: farewell to holy families and the company of the aureoled. Art has descended to earth: become a citizen, almost a housewife. Heaven is unimportant: what is important is Holland and the Dutch. Let there be Dutch pictures! A religious subject may creep in now and then, but (unless Rembrandt holds the brush or the burin) it will not be a religious picture. Worldliness has set in thoroughly. We have travelled very far from Fra Angelico and Francesca's "Nativity."



MOUSEHOLD HEATH

AFTER THE PICTURE BY OLD CROME IN THE NATIONAL GALLERY

This reminds me that after I had put that question to the dinner table about one's favourite Italian picture in the National Gallery, I followed it by another bearing upon one's favourite picture on the northern side, knowing perfectly well myself which I would take were I limited only to one. Now here again opinions differed. One choice was Rembrandt's landscape with Tobias and the Angel in the foreground; another was the Rokeby "Venus"; another Hobbema's "Avenue at Middelharnis"; another Gainsborough's "Mrs. Siddons"; another "The Fighting Temeraire": while we were told that a certain illustrious artist whose taste should be supreme had once named George Stubbs' "Landscape with a Gentleman holding his Horse" as the picture he would soonest carry off. Then I made my choice — Old Crome's "Mousehold Heath"; and I regret to say that, such is human imitativeness, three or four of the others at once went back on their own selection and substituted mine. But I have no doubt whatever that to me this landscape is the most fascinating picture in the National Gallery not by an Italian master.

We now come into Room X.

Weak as the National Gallery is, as we shall see, in German art and French art, no one can deny the thoroughness and superlative excellence of its three Netherland rooms. The English have always appreciated Dutch art. To have seventeen Rembrandts is alone no small matter; but we have also three Hals', and three De Hoochs, and three Jan Steens, and three Terburgs, and probably the best Hobbema that exists, and the best of Van der Helst's single figures. I doubt too if Van Dyck ever surpassed the distinction and power of his Cornelius Van der Geest in the large room which we are now entering.

We come to Rembrandt instantly, just inside on the left: where are his fascinating girl's head, No. 237, with the amused expression and ruddy tints of health, and his "Old Lady" in a ruff, No. 775 — one of those wonderful heads that come right out of the canvas and seem always to have been our personal acquaintances. I mention the other Rembrandts here — the sombre "Jew Merchant," No. 51; the two portraits of himself, as a young man and an old man — Nos. 672 and 221; the "Old Man" next 672; the "Burgomaster" next that; the other "Old Lady," also in a ruff, No. 1675, a little wizened but immortal; and the "Jewish Rabbi" — No. 190. These are the greatest of them, and these alone make our National Gallery priceless. There are also "The Woman Taken in Adultery" and "The Adoration of the Shepherds," two of the pictures with which the collection began: both lighted in that way which added the word Rembrandtesque to the language; the masterly "Woman Bathing," one of his most brilliant oil sketches (look at the way the chemise is painted); and lastly the beautiful grave landscape — beyond Ruysdael or any of the regular Dutch landscape painters: "Tobias and the Angel," No. 72 — a picture which always draws me to it. It is stupendous — this man's mastery of his means.

I always wonder if No. 757 — "Christ Blessing the Little Children," which is said to be of the school of Rembrandt, was not painted by Nicolas Maes. The child in the foreground seems straight from his brush, and he was Rembrandt's pupil. We come to him with No. 1247, "The Card Players," a very fascinating and powerful work, very near Rembrandt indeed, which hangs between Van der Helst's curious portrait of a lady, No. 1248, and Cuyp's great landscape in a golden light, No. 53, with the horse-

man in the red coat — also one of the original pictures in the National Gallery and still one of the pleasantest. The Rubens near it — "The Abduction of the Sabine Women" — which I for one find tedious and less interesting than his two landscapes, Nos. 157 and 66, was also an initial picture; but of Rubens I find it hard to say anything. The largest picture in the room is Van Dyck's portrait of Charles I on horseback, but it is not equal in greatness to his beautiful head of Cornelius Van der Geest (reproduced opposite page 192), one of the greatest of all portraits.

We come now to smaller works — Jan van Vost's very attractive portrait of a girl, No. 1137; and Nicolas Maes' "Idle Servant" and Peter de Hooch's "Dutch Housecourt," both triumphs of domestic art, and the Peter de Hooch — as always — a miracle of lighting; but both men are better in Room XII. Here also are some fine Ruysdaels, Van Dyck's very interesting and beautiful "Miraculous Draught of Fishes," another Albert Cuyp, a Jan Both (No. 1917) that might have given hints to Gainsborough and Linnell; a very fascinating little Van der Poel — No. 1061, and a Nicholas Berchem one would love to carry away — No. 1005; and, on the screens, three of Gerard Dou's minute but great portraits, Terburg's minute but amazing "Congress of Munster," one of the most extraordinary of human feats, and Van der Helst's very beautiful and serene portrait of a lady, in which black satin and lace are painted as they perhaps never will be again.

In Room XI are more masterpieces, chief of which are the three portraits by Frans Hals, all beggaring one's store of adjectives and all making all other painters of the ruddy human face, even Rembrandt himself, almost fumblers. No one so perpetuated the life of the eye and the cheek as

this jovial Haarlemmer. Vermeer also hangs in this room — in one picture known to be by him, No. 1383, "A Young Lady at a Spinet," which has all his magical skill and distinction but is artificial and to me not very attractive; and also, I think, in the boy in the new picture attributed to him — No. 1699, "The Lesson." Only Vermeer, one feels, could have painted that boy's hair and temple. Whoever the artist was, he was a great genius. Here also hangs Terburg's "Portrait of a Gentleman," in which black cloth is painted with a distinction that I have never seen elsewhere — a picture from which Whistler must have learned much. I would also mention a little Schalcken — a gem — in which an old woman scours brass.

Immediately inside Room XII is the best of the Peter de Hoochs — the "Interior of a Dutch House," No. 834, reproduced opposite page 66, most marvellously lighted and alive; and near it is the best National Gallery Metsu, No. 839, "The Music Lesson," in which he is again faithful to the type we observed at the Wallace Collection. Between them is another Terburg — very dexterous — "The Guitar Lesson," but not the equal of the Terburg we have just seen. Rubens' "Triumph of Silenus" and his "Chapeau de Poil" both hang here, the "Triumph," one of his most tremendous orgies in flesh painting and voluptuous *brio;* and then we come to the first of the Jan Steens — also a music lesson, No. 856, where the girl is painted — face, dress and hands — as this inspired tippler alone could paint. And the music master is superb. Some exquisite Adrian Van der Veldes and Wouvermans, another Peter de Hooch, a charming Karel du Jardin and a very fascinating view of Cologne by Jan van der Heyden bring us to Hobbema's great landscape "The Avenue at Middelharnis" (reproduced opposite page 182), which exerts a spell which

I cannot explain, but which never weakens. Close by is a vast Koninck which gathers up scores of miles of Holland — No. 836 — and beneath it the most marvellous example of Dutch minuteness in the collection — "The Poulterer's Shop" by Gerard Dou. The blanket, the hare, the hen's eye, the two faces — these surely are in their way as remarkable as any efforts of man's ingenuity. A fine broad head by Rembrandt hangs next, by way of contrast. Passing many minor masterpieces, including another Jan Steen and No. 820, another golden Berchem, very like a Wilson, we come to two of the smallest but best pictures here — Albert Cuyp's piebald horse, No. 1683, and Nicolas Maes' No. 159, a great example of fine painting and sympathy. At the end of the room are several large landscapes — a Cuyp, a Koninck, and the grandest of all the many Ruysdaels — "View over a flat wooded country." Close by are smaller and very beautiful landscapes by Wynants, Both and Everdingen. And so we come to an end; but such is the perfection of the Dutch painting that, as in Rooms X and XI, I might have supplied more of the other pictures with superlatives too.

In Room XIII, which belongs to the late Italians, I must confess to some weariness. Guido Reni I find too sentimental, and Canaletto monotonous. Guardi is here, it is true, but not as he is at the Wallace Collection, except in No. 1054, and here is Salvator Rosa, tremendous but not sublime. Canaletto's "Landscape with Ruins," No. 135, is happier than his more architectural work, and his "Eton College" could not be better, while a fine blue burns in No. 1059 — "San Pietro de Castello, Venice." His 127 and 163 are undoubtedly fine, but one feels he is over-represented. Of the Caraccis the two scenes in the life of Silenus seem to me his most interesting work, and

Guercino's "Dead Christ" is in the grand manner even if it is not grand. A little gay landscape by Zais — No. 1297 — stays in the mind.

Room XIV brings us to Spain and once again to superlative greatness and distinction; for here are nine or perhaps ten Velasquez' — including his "Admiral Pulido-Paraja," his "Boar Hunt," and his "Betrothal." It is no small thing to possess these Velasquez' and those at the Wallace Collection (notably "The Lady with a Fan"); but when the "Rokeby Venus" was added this year our prestige rose still higher. Personally I do not derive so much pleasure from this picture as from those in the master's prevailing manner: it seems too much like his contribution to the Salon: it seems to me to have the least touch of vulgarity, which, before one saw it, one would have said was impossible in anything from that commanding and distinguished brush; but even feeling like this, one can realise how rare a possession the "Venus" is and be proud that England owns it. When I think of Velasquez in our two great collections the pictures that always rise before the inward eye are the "Admiral" here, and the "Lady with a Fan" at Hertford House — both reproduced in this book. The "Admiral" is one of the world's great pictures: a gentleman's picture pre-eminently. Fascinating in another way is the brilliant "Betrothal," which I always like to remember was once the property of Sir Edwin Landseer, who, if his own art was over direct and primitive, could appreciate the masterly subtlety and alluring half tones of this Spanish grandee. The "Dead Warrior" below the "Betrothal" is only attributed to Velasquez; but whoever painted it was a great man. The "Boar Fight" that hangs next it is immense and overpowering, but it always seems to me to lack air.

Against the vivid "Sketch of a Duel in the Prado," close by, no such charge can be brought. The other Velasquez' are two Philips, "Christ at the Column," with the exquisite kneeling child, and "Christ in the House of Martha," with the haunting strong sullen face of the servant girl: — altogether a marvellous collection.

Murillo is here too, in both his moods — the sweet pietistic mood in which he painted the "Holy Family" and "St. John and the Lamb," so irresistibly warm and rich, and the worldly and masterful mood which gave us his marvellous "Boy Drinking" — that wonderfully living head. It remains only to mention Zurbaran — who might be said to blend Velasquez and Murillo, and who had one of the surest hands among all painters; Goya's brilliant portrait of "Doña Isabel Corbo de Porcel"; and the charming little "Virgin and Child" of Morales.

Room XV, which belongs to the German school, contains but a meagre store. What it has is good; but there is little of it and the most beautiful picture of all, Holbein's "Christina, Princess of Denmark," one of the sweetest and serenest of all portraits, is only lent — not this time by the beneficent Mr. Salting but by the Duke of Norfolk. May he never reclaim it! The show picture here is Holbein's "Ambassadors," which is a great work but hard. Nearer to one's heart comes Dürer's portrait of his father, No. 1938, a little like Ridolfo del Ghirlandaio's "Portrait of a Gentleman" in Room VI, and very satisfying. As with the Flemish school in Room IV, so with the German here, many of the most interesting and beautiful pictures are by unknown hands: such as No. 658 "Death of the Virgin," No. 687 "The Santa Veronica," No. 705 "Three Saints," No. 707 "Two Saints," No. 722 "Portrait of a Lady," No. 1049 "The Crucifixion," and No. 1087 "The

Mocking of Christ." These are remarkable either for simplicity or charm or realism, or a blend of all. One should notice too No. 291, "The Portrait of a Young Lady," by Lucas Cranach, a very striking face.

The two rooms that follow, Nos. XVI and XVII, serve only to show how poor in great French painting our National Gallery is. The Wallace Collection and the Ionides Collection (at South Kensington) help to make up the deficiency; but it is to me a matter for regret, almost shame, that so far as the English nation is concerned the Barbizon School might never have put brush to palette. Millet, Corot, Daubigny, Troyon, Rousseau, Courbet, Lepage — the National Gallery knows none of them.[1] Nor does it know Watteau or Ingres. In fact its two French rooms, were it not for Claude and the Poussins, would be grotesque. But with such landscapes as the Claudes (some of which were among the few pictures bought in 1824 from John Julius Angerstein with which to start this great collection) and the "Calling of Abraham" by Gaspard Poussin (called Dughet in the catalogue, where Claude will be found under Gellée) our credit, if not saved, is yet not wholly lost. For the rest, there is the prettiness of Greuze and Madame le Brun; and an interesting and masterly piece of still life by Chardin.

It is in Room No. XVI that the two Turners hang, to show to the world how much better he held himself than Gellée. Room for both without this comparison: but if such a competitive plan had been the rule, Wilson might have hung a picture beside No. 61 and not feared the result.

Among the many Sir Joshuas in Room XVIII, the first of the British school — all fine, all touched with grandeur — I have chosen for reproduction the "Portrait of Two

[1] A Diaz has just been added.



PORTRAIT OF TWO GENTLEMEN

AFTER SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS' PICTURE IN THE NATIONAL GALLERY

Gentlemen" (No. 754) because it has always fascinated me most. But I would not call it greater perhaps than one or two others — the Johnson, for example, or the Keppel, or the Lord Heathfield, or the very haunting Anne Countess of Albemarle. In the same room are such famous mothers' pictures as the "Age of Innocence" and the "Angels' Heads." London is extraordinarily rich in Reynolds': here, at the Wallace Collection (where they are all beautiful women), at the National Portrait Gallery, and at the Diploma Gallery. Abundance has always marked the greatest English artists, whether with the brush or the pen, the abundance which we find in Reynolds and Turner and Constable, in Shakespeare and Scott, in Fielding and Thackeray and Dickens — the large manner.

The other picture in this room that I reproduce is Romney's "Lady with a Child" (No. 1667), which I have chosen for its charm and for the amazing vitality of the little girl, who is as real, as living, as any figure ever painted, although I do not suggest that the picture is greater technically than his portrait of Lady Craven, or "The Parson's Daughter," close by, or the famous sketch of Lady Hamilton as a Bacchante. Its claims are, however, more urgent — for a mother and child (and such a child) have ultimately — as the great masters knew — a deeper appeal than any woman alone, however beautiful, can have. Another interesting Romney, painted with a hard brilliance of which he had the secret, hangs in the next room — Mr. and Mrs. William Lindon — among the landscapes, and might with advantage change places with a landscape in Room XVIII. For Raeburn, who was, I think, more powerful than Romney, but who does not appeal to so many, we must seek the staircase, where are his very distinguished "Lieut.-Col. McMurdo" (No. 1435) and

his "Portrait of a Lady" (No. 1146) — both grave and fine and bearing all the traces of a master's hand.

But Room XVIII to many persons is less noteworthy for the portraits I have named, than for No. 683, Gainsborough's Mrs. Siddons, in the large black hat and feathers and the blue and white striped dress. This is the first picture they look at and the last. Brilliant and masterly as it is, I must confess to a want of interest in it. I can stand before it quite impassive: it affects me like a kind of quintessential Burlington House — the Royal Academy portrait carried out to its higher power. Sir Thomas Lawrence's Mrs. Siddons in Room XX seems to me far greater. Before that one has a pulse. Nor do I care for Gainsborough's landscape, No. 925, in Room XVIII — all green wool — as much as for those in Room XX to which we shall come soon.

First, however, Room XIX, which is Hogarth's: for here hang his most exquisite "Shrimp Girl," No. 1162, which to my mind proves him a great painter more convincingly than the "Marriage à la Mode" series or any of his satirical work or the "Sigismonda mourning over the heart of Guiscardo." "The Shrimp Girl," and the portrait of Mrs. Salter (No. 1663), and one or two of the heads of his servants (No. 1374), exhibit a Hogarth whose fine free vivid way with paint interests me far more than his delineation of character and drama, where technically he seems to me to come far below Jan Steen. But Jan Steen could not have painted the Mrs. Salter: rather indeed does that, in its easy cool liquid colouring, suggest Vermeer of Delft. In Room XIX also are a superb Alexander Nasmyth; the two pretty laundry maids by Morland's father; and one or two small canvases by the English Canaletto, Samuel Scott.

I have not yet named the most exquisite thing of all, and after the "Shrimp Girl" and Mrs. Salter, the best: a little formal trifle by the gorgeous Richard Wilson, No. 302, "View in Italy." The further description in the catalogue is, "An ancient Roman ruin, a mutilated statue leaning against a wall: two figures in the foreground." But O the joy of it. It is a picture to light a whole room. Below it is another, No. 1064, "On the River Wye," hardly less irresistible, and in the next room — Room XX — which we now enter, are several more, notably No. 1290, "Landscape with Figures," filled with the Wilsonic glory and the glow — the light that never was on sea or shore but inhabited his paint box.

Room XX is not, however, Wilson's room, wonderful as he is, nor should I call it Gainsborough's, although his landscapes also glorify its walls. In my mind Room XX stands as Old Crome's room — for here hangs "Mousehold Heath," to me the most lovely landscape in English art, and the rarest. When I enter Room XX it becomes the abode of "Mousehold Heath" and "Mousehold Heath" only. It is that, I realise, which I came to see; and when I go away it is with the golden light of it, the scented air of it, in my very system. Not all Turner's Titanic miracles, not all Constable's mighty transcriptions of English weald and weather, not all Wilson's memories of the age of gold, affect me as Crome does in this picture and in "The Windmill." I do not say that he is greater than they; but upon me he exerts a greater influence, to me he is more of a magician. Yet the best that the official catalogue can say of him is that "he has often produced an admirable effect." My God!

Another picture in Room XX — which is principally a landscape room — that I covet, but in a far less degree, is

Gainsborough's "View of Dedham," No. 1283, which has a lovely sky and is, I think, the best of this painter's landscapes, although No. 80, "The Market Cart," is better known. Thomas Barker's Somerset landscape, No. 1039, is fine too. Here also is George Morland, whose work, however overlaid with peach bloom, is always lovable, and perhaps in its smiling prosperity and peace the completest contrast that could be found to the adjacent Copleys — "The Death of Chatham," "The Death of Pierson," and "The Siege of Gibraltar" (interesting for corroborating Reynolds' portrait of Lord Heathfield in the next room) — illustrations, as one might say, for *The Graphic*, carried out with amazing skill and spirit. One of these I recollect vividly as the first great picture I ever saw — for it used to be on the staircase, and as a child I wondered before it as we entered the National Gallery on the way to cooler things. That was thirty years ago, I suppose; but I remember the impression still.

If Room XX is Crome's room, Room XXI is Constable's. Crome's and Constable's — the conjunction is interesting: to me intensely so because in the "Mousehold Heath" and more than one of the Constable sketches, but particularly the "Stoke-by-Nayland, Suffolk," No. 1819, "The Mill Stream," No. 1816, "The Country Lane," No. 1821, and "The Cornfield," No. 1065, one seems to see the germ of Barbizon landscape. As one so often sees the father in the son — a hint of the elder generation in a passing expression on even the infant's face — so as one looks at these pictures may one catch glimpses of Troyon and Rousseau, Diaz and Millet. The gleaner in the foreground of No. 1065 is sheer Millet. Constable's larger and more painty landscapes, the "Flatford Mill," "The Hay Wain," and so forth, seem to me smaller efforts than some of his more



LADY AND CHILD

AFTER THE PICTURE BY ROMNEY IN THE NATIONAL GALLERY

impressionistic and rapid sketches here and elsewhere — at South Kensington and the Diploma Gallery. There is less of inevitable masterly genius about them than in the little "Summer Afternoon after a Shower," No. 1815, which is terrific, and No. 1817, "The Gleaners," and No. 1822, "Dedham Vale." These are to me among the greatest works of English art.

Room XXI contains also James Ward's view of Harlech Castle, in the grand manner, a vast landscape of much power and interest; and here are six Turners which have overflowed from Room XXII, two of them of especial beauty — the "Bligh Sands," No. 496, and "Abingdon," No. 485, in a golden morning mist. It is to this room also that one must go for Wilkie's gentle translations of Jan Steen and Teniers into homely Doric, and for a beautiful mellow Cotman, "River Scene," No. 1111, of which I never tire.

Of the Turners in Room XXII I feel myself incapable of adequate speech. One seems to be in the presence of some great natural force, at times almost a whirlwind. To me, to whom art is never so appealing as when it is still, reposeful, shipwrecks and tempests are merely amazing; and so I always seek first, and return again and again to, three pictures of a quietness equal to the quietude of any landscape I know, in which perhaps the quietude is the more noticeable by the absence of any external aid. It is the essential quietude of the country. I refer to the "Chichester Canal," No. 560, which is reproduced on the page opposite 126, to "Petworth Park," No. 559, painted in the same year, and to No. 492 on the opposite wall, "A Frosty Morning: Sunrise," which conveys a sense of still cold more completely than any picture I know, however they may be loaded with corroborative snowflakes or

figures blowing on their nails. These are my favourites — these and such fairy scenes as "The Fighting Téméraire," and "Agrippina landing with the ashes of Germanicus" (one wonders why Turner troubled to find a subject at all); and such gorgeous southern daydreams as the two pictures of Venice, Nos. 534 and 535; and "Caligula's Palace" in all its lovely unreality; and the "Bay of Baiae" and "Childe Harold's Pilgrimage"; and "Crossing the Brook," where he seems, after his competitive wont, to have set himself the task of going beyond everyone in Rooms XX and XXI and, in sheer might at any rate, to have succeeded. These I admire most — these and the two great works which Turner ordered to be hung beside the Claudes in Room XVI, of which to my mind the "Dido Building Carthage" runs Claude very close indeed, while the other, "The Sun Rising in a Mist," enters a region of which Claude knew nothing. Having seen these, there is still before one the exquisite delight of the Turner water colours in the basement.

And here my rapid and perhaps far too personal and opinionated survey of the National Gallery ends.

CHAPTER IX

THE STRAND AND COVENT GARDEN

The Strand — A Cosmopolitan Street — Waterloo Bridge and white stone — The Adelphi — The Brothers Adam — Adelphi Terrace and Buckingham Street — Samuel Pepys, a great Londoner — The old Palaces — The Covent Garden stalwarts — A modern bruiser — New thoroughfares — Will's Coffee House — Charles and Mary Lamb — The Lyceum — Benedick and Beatrice — Dr. Primrose and Olivia — Sotheby's — Interesting and not interesting — Essex Street — Simpson's of the Past — Chop Houses — London's love of affront — Modes of Slavery — The picturesque omnibus — A Piccadilly scene — St. Mary's Le Strand — The Maypole — The Swinge-bucklers — St. Clement Danes — The Law Courts

I COULD not, I think, explain why, but I have more distaste for the Strand than for any street in London. I would avoid it as carefully, from pure unreasoning prejudice, as Count D'Orsay or Dick Swiveller avoided certain other districts on financial grounds. This, I fear, proves me to be only half a Londoner — if that; for the Strand to many people *is* London, all else being extraneous. They endure their daily tasks elsewhere only because such endurance provides them with the means to be in the Strand at night.

The most Bohemian of London streets, if the Strand could cross to Paris it would instantly burgeon into a boulevard. Its prevailing type is of the stage: the blue chin of Thespis is very apparent there, and the ample

waistcoat of the manager is prominent too. Except at night, on the way to the Gaiety, the fashionable youth avoid the Strand; and indeed the best-dressed men and women are not seen on its pavements, howsoever they may use its carriage way. But with these exceptions, all London may be studied there; and other nations too, for the great hotels and Charing Cross station tend to cosmopolitanise it. Probably at no hour of the day or night are more than half the Strand's population true Londoners.

If the Strand is too much for one, as it may easily be, the escape is very simple. You may be on the banks of the Thames in two minutes from any part of it, or on the beautiful Adelphi Terrace, or among the flowers and greenery of Covent Garden, or amid the peace of the Savoy chapel or the quietude of Essex Street. Standing on the south end of Waterloo Bridge on a sunny afternoon you get one of the best views of London that is to be had and learn something of the possibilities of the city's white stone. Somerset House from this point is superb, St. Paul's as beautiful and fragile as any of Guardi's Venetian domes. Above the green of the trees and the Temple lawns and the dull red of the new Embankment buildings, broken here and there by a stone block, you see Wren's spires pricking the sky, St. Bride's always the most noticeable; and now, far back, gleaming with its new whiteness and the gold of its figure of Justice, is the new Central Criminal Court, to add an extra touch of light. Culminating statues gilded or otherwise are beginning to be quite a feature of London buildings. The New Gaiety Theatre has one; Telephone House in Temple Avenue has a graceful Mercury; over the Savoy portico stands a noble Crusader. Less ambitious but not less pleasing is the gold galleon forming a weather-vane on Mr. Astor's Embankment office,



THE CITY FROM WATERLOO BRIDGE

which is as fine in its way as the Flying Dragon on Bow Church in Cheapside.

The Adelphi, which dates from 1768, consists of the Terrace, standing high overlooking the river, and its neighbouring streets, John Street, Robert Street, James Street, William Street, and Adam Street, together with the arches beneath. It was the work of the Scotch architects Robert, John, James and William Adam, who in its generic title and in these four streets celebrate for ever their relationship and their names. The Terrace must be seen from the Embankment or the river if its proportions are to be rightly esteemed; and one must go within one of the houses to appreciate the beauty of the Adam ceilings and fireplaces, which are the perfect setting for the furniture of Heppelwhite and Sheraton. English taste in decoration and design has certainly never since reached the height of delicacy and restraint it then knew.

No house in the Terrace has been replaced or very seriously tampered with, and all have some interesting association, chief among them being No. 4, where in 1779 the gaiety of the nation was eclipsed by the death of Garrick. The other Adelphi streets have historic memories too. Disraeli always believed that he was born at No. 2 James Street, in a library, although the facts seem to be against him; at No. 18 John Street is the Society of Arts, whence come London's tablets of great men, of which I have already said something; and at No. 2 Robert Street lived Thomas Hood, who sang the "Song of the Shirt."

More ancient is the district between the Adelphi and the Charing Cross District Railway station. Here we go back a hundred years before the Adelphi was built, to associations with the great name of Buckingham — Buckingham Street, Duke Street, and Villiers Street being its

chief quarters. Of these Buckingham Street retains most signs of age. Samuel Pepys lived there for many years, in the south-west corner house overlooking the river, which he probably came to think his own; Peter the Great lodged at the opposite corner; Jean Jacques Rousseau and David Hume were together in Buckingham Street in 1765, before they entered upon their great and unphilosophic quarrel; Etty painted at No. 14 and Clarkson Stanfield's studio was below him.

Pepys' companion diarist John Evelyn resided for a while in Villiers Street, which is now given up to cheap eating-houses and meretricious shops, and on Sunday evenings is packed with rough boys and girls. Steele lived here after the death of his wife. The street is much changed since then, for Charing Cross station robbed it of its western side.

I am inclined to think that Pepys when all is said is the greatest of the Londoners—a fuller, more intensely alive Londoner than either Johnson or Lamb. Perhaps he wins his pre-eminence rather by his littleness, for to be a Londoner in the highest one must be rather trivial or at least be interested in trivialities. Johnson was too serious, Lamb too imaginative, to compete with this busy Secretary. Neither was such an epicure of life, neither found the world fresh every morning as he did. It is as the epicure of life that he is so alluring. His self-revelations are valuable in some degree, and his picture of the times makes him perhaps the finest understudy a historian ever had; but Pepys' greatness lies in his appreciation of good things. He lived minute by minute, as wise men do, and he extracted whatever honey was possible. Who else has so fused business and pleasure? Who else has kept his mind so open, so alert? Whenever Pepys found an odd quarter of an hour

he sang or strummed it away with a glad heart; whenever he walked abroad his eyes were viligant for pretty women. No man was more amusable. He drank "incomparable good claret" as it should be drunk, and loved it; he laughed at Betterton, he ogled Nelly Gwynn, he intrigued with men of affairs, he fondled his books, he ate his dinner, all with gusto and his utmost energy. Trivial he certainly was, but his enjoyment is his justification. Samuel Pepys was a superb artist in living. He was a man of insatiable inquisitiveness: there was always something he considered "pretty to see"; and it was this gift of curiosity that made him the best of Londoners. He had also the true Londoner's faculty of bearing with equanimity the trials of others, for all through the great plague and the great fire he played his lute with cheerfulness.

Turning into the pleasant Embankment Gardens at the foot, one comes at once upon the York Water Gate, which was built by the Duke of Buckingham on the shore of the river to admit boats to his private staithe, those being the days when the Thames was a highway of fashion. To-day it is given up to commerce. But he did not complete his design of rebuilding the old Palace; the gate is all that now remains; and the site of York House is covered by Buckingham Street and its companions — just as the site of Durham House, where Raleigh lived, is beneath the Adelphi, and that of Arundel House beneath Arundel Street and its neighbourhood, and that of old Somerset House beneath the present building of the same name.

Only two relics of the old Strand palaces remain: the York Water Gate and the Savoy chapel, one of London's perfect buildings, dating from 1505 and offering in its quietude the completest contrast to the bustle of the surrounding neighbourhood. The outside walls alone

represent the original structure, and they, I fancy, only in parts. Among those who lie beneath its stones are Mrs. Anne Killigrew, whom Dryden mourned, and George Wither the poet, who sang divinely in prison of the consolations of the muse.

Covent Garden being for the most part a wholesale market, it has none of the interest of the Paris Halles, where the old women preside over stalls of fruit and vegetables arranged with exquisite neatness, and make up pennyworths and two pennyworths with so thoughtful an eye to the preservation of economy. We have nothing like that in London. In London if you want two pennyworth of mixed salad you must buy six pennyworth and throw away the balance, economy being one of the virtues of which we are ashamed; nor do we encourage open air stalls except for the poor. Hence where it is retail Covent Garden deals only in cut flowers and rare fruits, although I must not forget the attractive little aviary on the roof at the east end of the central building, where the prettiest of the little cage birds of all countries twitter their appeal to you to take them home and love them.

There is something in the constitution of the London porter, whether he unloads ships or wagons, carries on his head vegetables, fish, or the products of farthest Ind, which arrests progress, keeps him apart and out of the movement. You notice this at the Docks, which are of course remote from the centre, but you notice it also at Covent Garden, within sound of the very modern Strand. Covent Garden remains independent and aloof. New buildings may arise, petrol instead of horses may drag in the wagons from the country, but the work of unloading and distributing vegetables and flowers remains the same, and the porters have an immemorial air and attitude

unresponsive to the times; while the old women who sit in rows in the summer shelling peas have sat thus since peas first had pods. Not only does the Covent Garden porter lead his own life insensitive to change, but his looks are ancient too: his face belongs to the past. It is not the ordinary quick London face: it has its scornful expression, of course, because London stamps a weary contempt on all her outdoor sons; but it is heavier, for example, than the Drury Lane face, close by. Perhaps the soil is responsible for this: perhaps Covent Garden depending wholly on the soil, and these men on Covent Garden, they have gained something of the rural stolidity and patience.

One could not have a better view of the Covent Garden porters collectively than fell to my lot one day recently, when I found some scores of them waiting outside the boxing club which used to be Evans's Rooms in Thackeray's day, and before that was Lord's Hotel, looking expectantly at its doors. I waited too, and presently there emerged alone a fumbling stumbling figure, a youth of twenty-four or so, neatly dressed and brushed, but with his cheeks and eyes a mass of pink puff. The daylight smote him almost as painfully as his late adversary must have done, and he stood there a moment on the steps wondering where he was, while Covent Garden, which dearly loves a fight with or without the gloves, murmured recognition and approval. No march of progress, no utilitarian wave, here. Byron's pugilist friend and master, Jackson of Bond Street, could he have walked in, would have detected little change, either in the crowd or the hero, since his own day.

Perhaps the most important event connected with St. Paul's Church, in Covent Garden, which in its original

form was built by Inigo Jones to be "the handsomest barn in England," was the marriage in 1773 of William Turner of Maiden Lane to Mary Marshall of the same parish; for from that union sprang Joseph Mallord William Turner, the painter, who was baptised there in 1775. Among those buried here are Samuel Butler the author of *Hudibras*, and Peter Pindar (Dr. Wolcot) the scarifier of Guelphs and Whitbreads, who wished his coffin to touch that of his great and satirical predecessor; William Wycherley, who wrote *The Country Girl;* Sir Peter Lely, who painted Stuart beauties; Grinling Gibbons, who carved wood like an angel; Dr. Arne, the musician; Thomas Girtin, the water-colourist, who died of his excesses at twenty-seven, but not before he had proved himself a master; and Charles Macklin, the actor, who lived to be 107.

It was in Maiden Lane, close by, that Turner was born, in 1775, and among famous sojourners there were Andrew Marvell and Voltaire. To-day it is given up to the stage, and it is difficult to pass through it without hearing the chorus of some forthcoming musical piece at practice in an upper room. Rule's oyster shop is here, the modern substitute for the historic Cyder Cellar, where a hundred years ago Porson drank incredible draughts and grew wittier with every potation. And it was in Maiden Lane that poor Terriss, the last of the swaggering romantics of the English stage, was murdered by a madman a few years ago.

Between Covent Garden and Drury Lane certain eighteenth century traces still remain; but east of Drury Lane is a wilderness of modernity. Everything has gone between that street and Lincoln's Inn Fields — everything. Men are not made London County Councillors for nothing.

At the time I write the houses in Kingsway and Aldwych have still to be built, a few isolated theatres and



CHICHESTER CANAL

AFTER THE PICTURE BY TURNER IN THE NATIONAL GALLERY

offices being all that is yet finished. It remains to be seen whether London, so conservative in its routes, so sentimentally attached to its old rights of way, will make any use of a wide road from the Strand to Holborn, but will not rather adhere to Bow Street and Endell Street or Chancery Lane. It has a way of doing so. Nothing has ever yet persuaded it to walk or drive up or down Shaftesbury Avenue, which for all the use it has been might never have ploughed through the Soho rookeries; while there are many people who would rather be splashed in St. Martin's Lane and among the bird fanciers of St. Andrew's two streets, than use the new and spacious Charing Cross Road. There is yet another reason why one looks with doubt on the usefulness of this new road, and that is that the great currents of London locomotion have set always east and west.

Of Covent Garden's two great theatres I have nothing to say; but the north-east corner house of Russell Street and Bow Street, with its red tiles and ancient façade, has much interest, for it was once, in a previous state, Will's Coffee House, where John Dryden sat night after night and delivered judgments on new books and plays. The associations of Will's are too numerous for me to dare to touch upon them further: they are a book alone. Next door, at No. 20 Russell Street, a hundred and more years later, over what is now a fruiterer's, lodged Charles and Mary Lamb; but the Society of Arts does not recognise the fact, nor even that Lamb was born at 2 Crown Office Row in the Temple, to which we are steadily drawing near. Lamb's rooms I fancy extended to the corner house too, and it was from one of these that, directly they were established there in 1817, Mary Lamb had the felicity to see a thief being conveyed to Bow Street police station.

Bow Street has now completely lost its antiquity and is no longer interesting. Nor would Wellington Street be interesting were it not for its association with Henry Irving and the Lyceum. It is true that Henry Irving is no more, and the Lyceum is transformed and vulgarised; but the memory of that actor is too vivid for it to be possible yet to pass through this street without a regret. The Lyceum, so long the stronghold of all that was most harmonious and romantic and dignified in the English drama, is now a music-hall with two performances a night, and never again will that great and courteous gentleman with whom its old fame is identified be seen on its stage. It was in a corner of the pit, leaning against the barrier between that part of the house and the stalls, that I saw all Irving's best performances in recent years, most exquisite of which to recall being always his Benedick in *Much Ado About Nothing* — or, as the programme hawkers who hovered about the queue in the dark passage of the Lyceum Tavern used to call it, "Much to-do about Nothing." Of all the myriad plays I have seen — good plays, middling plays, and plays in which one's wandering eyes return again and again most longingly to the magic word "exit" — I remember no incident with more serene pleasure than the entry of Miss Terry as Beatrice with the words "Against my will I am sent to bid you come in to dinner," and the humorous gravity, a little perplexed by the skill of this new and alluring antagonist, of Benedick's face as he pondered his counter stroke and found none. And with it comes the recollection of that other scene between these two rare and gentle spirits, when, in "Olivia," Dr. Primrose, having at last found his weeping daughter, would take her home again. All reluctance and shame, she demurs and shrinks until he comes beautifully down to

level ground with her, by saying, with that indescribably sweet smile of his, "You ran away with one man: won't you run back with me?" and wins the day. Irving may have lacked many qualities of the great actor; but when he died there passed away from the English stage something of charm and distinction and picturesque power that it is not likely in our time to recover; and the world was the poorer by the loss of a commanding gentleman.

It is in the lower part of Wellington Street, between the Strand and Waterloo Bridge, that Sotheby's is situated — that famous sale-room where book-collectors and dealers meet to bid against each other for first editions, and where, in these unpatriotic times, the most valuable of our autograph letters and unique literary treasures are allowed to fall to American dollars.

York Street, which was built early in the seventeenth century, retains much of its old character. It was at No. 4 that De Quincey wrote his *Confessions;* and the superb Elliston, who counted fish at dinner "as nothing," lived at No. 5. I am exploring and naming only the old streets where the actual historic houses still stand, because to walk down a dull street because a great man lived in it before the rebuilder and modern taste had made it dull, is not an attractive occupation. And I am omitting all names but those that seem to me to lend a human note to these pages. Streets such as Arundel Street and Norfolk Street in the Strand, which had many literary and other associations, but have been entirely rebuilt and are now merely business thoroughfares lined with fantastic red brick façades, do not seem to me interesting. But Essex Street, close by, does seem to me interesting, because it retains its old Georgian form, and being a *cul-de-sac* for carriages, is quiet to boot. The Essex Head, it is true, where Sam's

Club met under Doctor Johnson's sway, has been rebuilt; but the lower part of the street is much as it was when Henry Erskine learnt oratory at the Robin Hood Club (as some of the speakers of our day learn it at the Cogers') and when the Young Pretender lodged at Lady Primrose's.

When I first came to London, Simpson's, the most famous of the Strand eating-houses, was beyond my purse. Not for two years did I venture between its doors, and then was so overawed that I might as well have fasted. I remember that the head waiter, in addition to the charge for attendance, which was, I think, threepence, although, such was my obvious unimportance, there had been none, automatically subtracted a sixpence as my tip to him, thus saving me the embarrassment of wondering if that were enough. It was the first thoughtful thing that had occurred during the meal. But later, when I had learned to call "Waiter" without a spasm of self-consciousness, I extracted much entertainment from Simpson's, not only in the restaurant, but upstairs in the Divan, where one might watch champions of chess mating in two moves, or read the current number of *Cornhill*.

But all that is changed. There is no Divan to-day, and no one there has ever heard of the *Cornhill*, and in place of the old shabbiness and comfort we have sumptuously upholstered rooms and all the paraphernalia of modernity. The chop-house has become a restaurant. The joints are still wheeled from table to table, but not with the old leisure, although still not so eagerly that the drivers' licences are in any danger of endorsement. Simpson's in its new shape is indeed symptomatic of the times. It even advertises.

The old Chop House is almost extinct, although I know still of one or two the addresses of which nothing shall induce me to divulge (lest a syndicate corrupt them), where

one still sits in bays, and eats good English food with English names, and waits a long time for it, and does not complain; where there is no cloakroom for hats and coats, and no door porters whose one aim in life is to send you away in a cab; where a twopenny tip goes farther than a shilling elsewhere; and where if one lights a pipe no German-Swiss manager suddenly appears, all suavity and steel, to say that pipes are not allowed. There are still two or three of such places, but probably by the time this book is published they will have gone too and no pipes be left. Londoners, who sing "Rule Britannia" at every smoking concert, turn to water before any foreign *maître d'hôtel.*

Although never perhaps so much a slave as when he is in a foreign restaurant, the Londoner loves always to wear shackles. No one accepts slights and insults so much as a matter of course. He may grumble a little, but he never really protests; and the next day he has forgotten. The Londoner has no memory. I say it again and again: he has no memory, and no public spirit or real resentment.

He supports national collections of pictures and books, but is quite happy when he goes to see them on Sunday afternoons, his only opportunity, and finds the door locked in his face.

In the course of a week he wastes hours on 'buses in the cold, during blocks caused by a handful of Italians (London's official road menders) repairing a hole made by an Electric Light or Gas Company; and though at the time he remarks that it is scandalous, he forgets all about it the instant the block is past.

He pays twice for having his hair cut or his chin shaved, once to the proprietor of the saloon and once to the operator (sometimes to add to the grotesqueness of the proceeding the proprietor and the operator being one). He allows

theatrical managers to charge him sixpence for a programme without which he cannot understand the play which he has already paid to see.

He does nothing towards reform when at one minute past eleven on Sunday, and twenty-nine minutes to one on ordinary nights, he is unable by law to buy anything to drink.

He pays his money day after day for a seat in a train, and cheerfully stands for the whole journey home, hanging perilously to a strap or hat rack, packed closer than the Humane Society (to which perhaps he contributes) would allow anyone to pack creatures who lack immortal souls.

Now and then a letter finds its way into the papers pointing out this and other hardships; but that is all. The railway companies and restaurateurs, the theatrical managers and writers, know Londoners too well to do more than smile in their sleeves and prepare new forms of aggression. London would be wretched were it not affronted.

In no street out of the city are omnibuses so constant as in the Strand, although to see the London 'bus at its best I think Whitehall is the place. As they come down the hill from Charing Cross into the spaciousness of the road opposite the Horse Guards, at a sharp trot, like ships in full sail, swaying a little under their speed, and shining gaily in all their hues, they are full of the joy of life and transmit some of it to the spectator. What London would be without its coloured omnibuses one dares not think. After the first flush of Spring, almost all her gaiety comes from them. Whitehall is the best at all times, but in April and May, when the trees (always a fortnight earlier than in the country) are vivid on the edge of the Green Park, and the sun has a nearly level ray, there is nothing

to equal the smiling loveliness of Piccadilly filled with omnibuses, as seen from the top of the hill, looking east, about Down Street. It is an indescribable scene of streaming colour and gentle vivacity. Words are useless: it needs Monet or Pisarro.

Mention of the slanting sun brings me back to the Strand; for there is nothing more beautiful in its way — certainly a way peculiar to London — than that crowded 'bus-filled street at the same afternoon hour, with the light on the white spire of St. Mary's at the east end, which now, in its isolation, more than ever seems to block the way. It is a graver, less Continental beauty than Piccadilly's: but it is equally indelible. Almost it makes me forgive the Strand.

St. Mary's church, like St. Martin's-in-the-Fields, is not, as most people would tell you, one of Wren's, but was built by Gibbs. Everything possible was done, some few years ago, to get permission to demolish it, for what were called the "Strand improvements"; but happily in vain. All honour to the resisters. The famous Maypole in the Strand stood on the site of this church. A cedar trunk, one hundred and thirty-four feet high, it was erected in 1661 in honour either of the Restoration or (and here comes in the sweet of ignorance) because a Strand farrier's daughter, the wife of General Monk, had become the Duchess of Albemarle.

St. Clement's Inn, close by St. Mary's Le Strand, a few years ago was still a backwater of peace, but is now obliterated and new houses bear its name — Clement's Inn, where young Master Shallow of Warwickshire, Little John Doit of Staffordshire, Black George Barnes of Staffordshire, and Francis Pickbone and Will Squele, a Cotswold man, were the devil's own swinge-bucklers. How could we pull

it down? But we would pull down anything. And New Inn, close by, of which Sir Thomas More was a member — that has gone too. Men, as I remarked before, are not made County Councillors for nothing.

With St. Clement Danes church, just to the east of St. Mary's Le Strand, and, like that, most gloriously in the very middle of the road, we come at last to the true Wren. It was in this church, one of London's whitest where it is white — of a whiteness, under certain conditions of light, surpassing alabaster — that Dr. Johnson had his pew, from which, we are told, he made his responses with tremulous earnestness. The pew was in the north gallery, where a tablet marks the spot, styling him (and who shall demur?) "the philosopher, the poet, the great lexicographer, the profound moralist and chief writer of his time." Among those buried here are Thomas Otway and Nathaniel Lee, the dramatists; Joe Miller, who made all the jokes, and in addition to being a "facetious companion," as his epitaph says, was a "tender husband" and "sincere friend," as humorists should be; Dr. Kitchener, the author of *The Cook's Oracle* and himself a "notable fork"; and Ackermann, the publisher of the *Repository*, which everyone who loves the London of the Regency, its buildings and costumes, in the fairest of all the methods of counterfeiting a city's life, namely copper-plate and aquatint, should know, and if possible possess.

And here at the Griffin, opposite the most fantastically and romantically conceived Law Courts in the world — the most astounding assemblage of spires, and turrets, and gables, and cloisters, that ever sprang from one Englishman's brain, — we leave the Strand and pass into Fleet Street, or, in other words, into the City of London.



ST. MARY-LE-STRAND

CHAPTER X

FLEET STREET AND THE LAW

Temple Bar — Charles Lamb — The Retired Cit — The Griffin — Printer's Ink — An All-night Walk in London — The Temple — Oliver Goldsmith — Lamb Again — Lincoln's Inn — Ben Jonson — Lincoln's Inn Fields — Old Mansions — Great First Nights — The Soane Museum — The Dissuasions of Eld — Dr. Johnson — The Cheshire Cheese — St. Dunstan's and St. Bride's

WHEN I first knew London — passing through it on the way to a northern terminus and thence to school — Temple Bar was still standing. But in 1878 it was pulled down, and with its disappearance old London's doom may be said to have sounded. Since that day the demolishers have taken so much courage into their hands that now what is old has to be sought out: whereas Temple Bar thrust antiquity and all that was leisurely and obsolete right into one's notice with unavoidable emphasis. The day on which it was decreed that Fleet Street's traffic must be no longer embarrassed by that beautiful sombre gateway, on that day Dr. Johnson's London gave up the ghost and a new utilitarian London came into being.

By the way, it is worth while to give an afternoon to a walk from Enfield to Waltham Cross, through Theobald's park, in order to stand before Temple Bar in its new setting. Enfield is in itself interesting enough, if only for its associations with one who loved London with a love

that was almost a passion, and who never tired of running over her charms and looking with wistful eyes from his rural exile across the fields towards the veil of smoke beneath which she spread her allurements: I mean, of course, Charles Lamb. It was an odd chance, which no one could have foreseen, least of all perhaps himself, to whom it must have stood for all that was most solid and permanent and essentially urban, that carried Temple Bar (beneath whose shadow he was born) to this new home among green fields, very near his own.

The Bar stands now as one of the gateways to Theobald's park. It was bought prior to demolition by Sir Henry Meux, and every brick and stone was numbered, so that the work of setting it up again in 1888 exactly as of old was quite simple. I know of no act of civic piety prettier than this. And there Temple Bar stands, and will stand, beneath great trees, a type of the prosperous cit who after a life of hard work amid the hum of the streets retires to a little place not too far from town and spends the balance of his days in Diocletian repose. What sights and pageants Temple Bar must recall and ruminate upon in its green solitude! The transplantation of the Elgin Marbles from the Parthenon to the British Museum — from dominating the Acropolis and Athens to serving as a source of perplexity to British sightseers in an overheated gallery of Bloomsbury — is hardly more violent than the transplantation of Temple Bar from Fleet Street and the city's feet to Hertfordshire and solitude.

A concrete example of English taste in the eighteen-seventies is offered by the study of the Griffin — the memorial which was selected to mark the site of Wren's gateway. It is curious to remember that the heads of traitors were displayed publicly on the spikes of Temple Bar

as recently as 1772. Barbarism is always surprising us by its proximity.

Even less than the Strand's pavements are those of Fleet Street fitted for loiterers. In fact we are now in the City, and urgent haste has begun: not quite as in Cheapside and Broad Street, for no one here goes without a hat, but bustle is now in the air, and with every step eastward we shall be more in the fray. From Fleet Street, however, though it may in itself seethe with activity, the escape is easy into quietude more perfect than any that the Strand has offered; for here is the Temple on the south, and on the north Lincoln's Inn with its gardens; here also are Clifford's Inn (now, in 1906, doomed to the speculator) and Serjeants', Inn; and here are the oddest alleys, not narrower than those between the Strand and Maiden Lane, but more tortuous and surprising, the air of all of them (if you can call it air) heavy with the thick oiliness of printer's ink.

Printer's ink is indeed the life blood of Fleet Street and its environs. The chief newspaper offices of London are all around us. *The Times*', it is true, is a little to the south-east, on the other side of Ludgate Hill station; but in Fleet Street, and between it and Holborn on the north and the river on the south, are nearly all the others. Here all day are men writing, and all night men printing it. If a tidal wave were to roll up the Thames and submerge London, the newspapers would go first: a thought for each of us to take as he will, with or without tears.

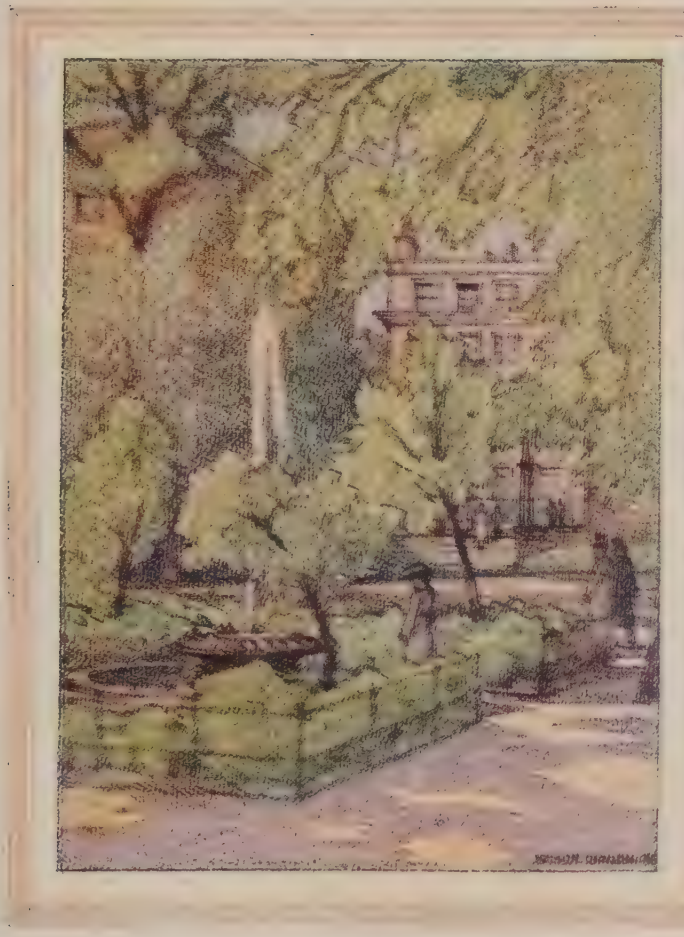
On an all-night walk in London, which is an enterprise quite worth adventuring upon, it is well to be in Fleet Street between three and five, when it springs into intense activity as the carts are being loaded with the papers for the early morning trains. From here one would go to

Covent Garden and smell the flowers — the best antidote to printer's ink that has been discovered.

The Temple, which spreads her cool courts and gardens all unsuspected within a few yards of Fleet Street, is best gained by the gateway opposite Chancery Lane, by the old house with a ceiling of Tudor roses that one used to contemplate as one was being shaved (all barbers' saloons should have good ceilings). It is now a County Council preserve. Almost immediately we come to the Temple church, the most beautiful small church in London and one of the most beautiful in the world — so grave in character and austere and decisive in all its lines; and yet so human too and interesting, with its marble Templars lying there on their circular pavement in a repose that has already endured for five centuries and should last for centuries more. Many of Lamb's old Benchers are buried beneath this church; and here also lie the learned John Selden, and James Howell who wrote the *Epistolæ*.

To the north of the church is a plain slab recording that Oliver Goldsmith, that eminent Londoner and child of genius, lies beneath it. He died at No. 2 Brick Court, up two pairs of stairs, in a "closet without any light in it," as Thackeray, who later had rooms below, described the poet's bedroom. That was on April 4, 1774, and the next morning, when the news went out, it was to this door that there came all kinds of unfortunate creatures to whom he had been kind — weeping and friendless now.

To name all the illustrious men who have had chambers in the Temple would not only be an undertaking of great magnitude but would smell overmuch of the Law. Rather would I lay stress on the more human names, such as poor Goldsmith's and Charles Lamb's. It was a little less than a year after Goldsmith had died at 2 Brick Court that at



IN THE TEMPLE GARDENS (FOUNTAIN COURT)

the same number in Crown Office Row Charles Lamb was born — on February 10, 1775. The Row is still there, but it has been rebuilt since Lamb's day, or perhaps only refaced. The gateway opposite leading into the garden is the same, as its date testifies. Lamb claimed to be a Londoner of the Londoners; but few Londoners have the opportunity of spending their childhood amid so much air and within sight of so much greenery as he. Perhaps to these early associations we may attribute some of the joy with which in after life, Londoner as he was (having lent his heart in usury to the City's stones and scenes), he would set out on an expedition among green fields.

I ventured just now to mock a little at the Law; and yet it is not fair to do so, for it is the Law that has preserved for London this beautiful Temple where all is peace and eighteenth-century gravity. Yet not everything has it retained, since no longer are the Inns of Court revels held here. It was in the Middle Temple Hall, which is a perfect example of Elizabethan architecture, that *Twelfth Night* was first played; and in this Hall is still preserved the table, made of wood from the Armada, on which Elizabeth signed Mary Queen of Scots' death warrant.

Lincoln's Inn, the Law's domain on the other side of Fleet Street, has its lawns and seclusion and old world quiet too; but it does not compare with the Temple. The Temple's little enclosed courts, with plane trees in their midst, of the tenderest green imaginable in early spring; her sun-dials and her emblems; her large green spaces sloping to the river; her church and her Master's house; her gateways and alleys and the long serene line of King's Bench Walk — these are possessions which Lincoln's Inn can but envy. And yet New Square is one of the most satisfying of London's many grave parallelo-

grams; and the chapel which Inigo Jones built rises nobly from the ground; and the old gateway in Chancery Lane does something to compensate for the loss of Temple Bar. Its date 1518 disposes of the story that Ben Jonson helped to build it, with a trowel in one hand and a book in the other, but I like to believe that he did a little desultory bricklaying in this way on some extension to it.

Chancery Lane has recently been ennobled by the new Record Office and made attractive by a little row of the lions which Alfred Stevens designed for the British Museum railings but which the British Museum authorities tired of and repudiated. Someone had the happy thought to set up a few of these delightful creatures (which may be bought in plaster of Paris for a few shillings of Brucciani) on the railings of the west side of the road opposite the Record Office.

To Lincoln's Inn Fields, which is now lawyers' offices and a public playing ground, but was once a Berkeley Square, we come by way of the Inn. On the north and south sides the rebuilders have already set their mark; but the west side, although the wave of reform that flung up Kingsway and Aldwych washes its very roots, is still standing, much as it was in the great days of the seventeenth century, except that what were then mansions of the great are now rookeries of the Law. No. 59 and 60, for example, with its two magnificent brick pillars, was built by Inigo Jones for the Earl of Lindsay. Inside are a few traces of its original splendours. The corner house, now No. 67, with the cloisters, was Newcastle House (previously Powis House) the residence of the great Duke of Newcastle. Lincoln's Inn Fields Theatre, where Pepys used to be so vastly amused (going there so often as to make Mrs. Pepys "as mad as the devil") was on a site

now covered by the Museum of the Royal College of Surgeons, to which the curious are admitted by order. Not for me are physiological whims and treasures of anatomy preserved in spirits of wine; rather would I stay outside and reflect on the first night of Congreve's *Love for Love* on April 30, 1695, with Mrs. Bracegirdle as Angelica, or of the première of *The Beggar's Opera*, thirty and more years later, with Lavinia Fenton so bewitching as Polly Peacham that she carried by storm the heart of the Duke of Bolton and became his Duchess. A little while ago I was reflecting that barbarism, although now, of course, extinct, is yet very recent; but to dip however casually into the history of London is to be continually reminded that for the most part nothing changes. Even as I write the papers are full of the marriages of two noblemen to actresses.

On the north side of Lincoln's Inn Fields is the Soane Museum, a curious medley of odds and ends with a few priceless things among them and a very capricious system of throwing open its doors. Indeed I know of no museum where the presence of visitors seems to be so resented: for after overcoming initial difficulties of getting in — the treasures being on view for only five months in the year, and only on certain days of each week, and no one of uncleanly dress being admitted: after ringing the bell and wiping one's boots, according to order: after giving up one's stick, writing one's name in a book, and deciding whether or not the place is sacred and how to deal with one's hat: after all this, the successful besieger becomes aware of three further dampening influences, (1) a want of light, (2) an absence of descriptive labels on the million and one fragments and knickknacks that make up this olla podrida, and (3) the presence in every room of a venerable

custodian whose slumbers one is conscious of cruelly interrupting by being so extraordinarily and unpardonably inconsiderate as to be there at all.

Under such an accumulation of embarrassments the examination of Sir John Soane's hotch-potch is neither an easy nor a very genial experience, and I am almost disposed to say that one may remain outside in Lincoln's Inn Fields without great loss. And yet that is not so: for if one did not lay siege to this fortress one would never see Hogarth's delicately coloured election series or "The Rake's Progress" in the original, and since in two or three of the subsidiary figures of "The Humours of an Election Entertainment" he comes nearer Jan Steen than in any of his work this would be a pity; and one would never see Canaletto's fine painting of the Grand Canal — better than any of that master's work at the Wallace Collection, I think; nor Giulio Clovio's illuminations to St. Paul's Epistles; nor a very interesting Watteau; nor several quaint missals, among them one whence the Bastard of Bourbon got his religion; nor a MS. of Lamb's Margaret of Newcastle; nor the MS. of Tasso's *Gerusalemme Liberata;* nor two of Reynolds' sketch books; nor many exquisite cameos and intaglios; nor Christopher Wren's watch; nor the silver pistol which Peter the Great ravished from a Turkish Bey; nor paintings on silk by Labelle, little delicate trifles as pretty as Baxter prints; nor enough broken pieces of statuary — gargoyles, busts, capitals, and so forth — to build a street of grottoes; nor the famous alabaster sarcophagus of Seti I, King of Egypt about 1370 B.C.

Taken as a whole it is an odd and bewilderingly bizarre collection brought together by an acquisitive and, I suspect, rather childish man, with apparently little sense of beauty but very catholic taste, who seems to have been

unable to resist any temptation to add one curiosity to another. Among the pictures at any rate there is a vast deal of rubbish, and everywhere is too much to see, the rooms being small and gloomy. There is the further difficulty of the custodians, the Cerberi. "Do people ever take advantage of the invitation to use this church for retirement and prayer?" was the question put once to a City verger. "Yes," he replied, or so the old story goes, "I catched two of 'em at it the other day." This pleasant anecdote was in my mind all the time I moved among Sir John Soane's impedimenta. "If I were to spend any time looking at this or that," I said to myself, "that patriarch over there with the drowsy yet disapproving eye might catch me at it. And what then?" So I moved on and on until I was once again in Lincoln's Inn's Fields, and the voices of the children in the enclosure told me that I was free: that here was humanity again, here was active life.

It is the duty of all who now take a walk down Fleet Street to visit the scenes associated with the great name of Johnson. Dr. Johnson's house in Gough Square still stands, throbbing with printing presses: you may still thread Bolt Court: you may worship, as he did, in St. Clement Danes'. But whether the wooden seat in the Cheshire Cheese which bears a brass plate sanctifying it to the Doctor was really his is another matter. None the less it has drawn many English sightseers and all Americans. The Cheshire Cheese, together with one or two chop-houses in the city where willow pattern plates and two-pronged forks are still used, represents the old guard in English restauration. How long they will be able to hold out I dare not prophesy: but not, I fear, long. There are indeed already signs at the Cheshire Cheese that devo-

tion to old ideas is not what it was. The famous pudding (lark and oyster, steak and kidney) was produced, I seem to recollect, with more ritual, more of an air, ten years ago than to-day. I have eaten of it but once, and shall eat of it no more. Not to my charge shall be laid the luring of any sweet-voiced lark into a Fleet Street kitchen, or indeed any kitchen whatsoever; but others have other views, and for them the arrival of the dish has long been one of London's crowded moments. Americans cross the Atlantic to partake of it and write their opinion in the visitors' book, which, not less depressingly facetious than all its kind, is rather more interesting by reason of an occasional name that has some artistic correlation. Old ale, a sanded floor, hot punch, and seats of a discomfort beyond that of the old third-class railway compartments or a travelling circus, complete the illusion of Johnsonian revelry.

More than any other street Fleet Street, in spite of all its new buildings, has kept an old London feeling. I think this is due in a great measure to its irregular façades, each one different and some very odd, and its many clocks and signs. To look down Fleet Street on a sunny afternoon is to get a very vivid sense of almost eighteenth-century animation. Modern as it all is, it always recalls to my mind the Old London street at one of the early South Kensington exhibitions. Every variety of architecture may be seen here — from the putative palace of Cardinal Wolsey to the *Daily Telegraph* office, from Sell's new building, with its sundial, to St. Dunstan's-in-the-West; while to glance down Middle Temple Lane is to have a genuine peep at the eighteenth century.

St. Dunstan's-in-the-West is Fleet Street's jewel, with its very curious, very beautiful, open-work tower, as exceptional in its way as St. Dunstan's-in-the-East, although not the



ADMIRAL PULIDO-PAREJA

AFTER THE PICTURE BY VELASQUEZ IN THE NATIONAL GALLERY

artistic equal of that delicate structure. The architect of the western St. Dunstan's was one Shaw, and it is not yet eighty years of age, all the old associations belonging to that which preceded it — the St. Dunstan's under whose shadow Charles Lamb says he was born; in which Donne preached; and which in the seventeenth century was surrounded by booksellers' shops, among them Smethwick's, who published *Romeo and Juliet* and *Hamlet*, and Marriot's, who put forth *The Compleat Angler*. The other Fleet Street church, St. Bride's, which is just off the road on the south, is older and has far more dignity: it is indeed one of Wren's finest efforts. Elsewhere I have said something of the spire under a busy sky. In a house in the churchyard Milton once lived, and beneath the church lies the author of *Pamela* and *Clarissa Harlowe*, under the central aisle.

It is at the Barley Mow, close by, in Salisbury Square, that the ancient society of the Cogers hold their parliament every Saturday night and settle questions of state over pipe and glass. One should certainly visit one of these debates, where so many speakers have first raised their voices and demolished the Government. Students of race will not be surprised to hear that there was never a Cogers' palaver without a brogue in it.

CHAPTER XI

ST. PAUL'S AND THE CHARTERHOUSE

Observing in London — The London gaze — A few questions — St. Paul's — Sir Christopher Wren — Temples of Prosperity — Spires of Genius — St. Paul's from a Distance — London from St. Paul's — The High Roads to the Country — Florid Monuments — An Anomaly — The Great Painters — The Thames Streets — Wren again — Billingsgate — St. Sepulchre's and Condemned Men — The Great Fire — The Cock Lane Ghost — Bartholomew's Hospital — St. Bartholomew the Great — A Wonderful Church — Cloth Fair — Smithfield Martyrs — The Charterhouse — The Old Gentlemen — Famous Schoolboys — A Spring Walk — Highgate and Hampstead Heath — The Friendly Inns — A word on Hampstead and Kate Greenaway

THERE are so many arresting movements in London, as indeed in all hives of men, that to observe widely is very difficult. Just as one is said not to be able to see a wood for trees, so one cannot rightly see a city for its citizens, London for its Londoners. I believe, to give an example of defective London observation, that one's tendency is to think that all its greater streets are straight; whereas hardly any are. Here is a question on that fallacy suggested to me one day as I stood at the point which we have now reached: "From the middle of the road under the railway Bridge at the foot of Ludgate Hill how much of St. Paul's do you see?" I would wager that the majority of Londoners would expect to see the whole façade; but they would be very wrong.

In one of his delightful books Dr. Jessopp remarks that whereas country people look up, Londoners look down. It

is largely this habit that has limited their observing powers; but London has itself to blame. I assume that one can observe well only by taking large views, and in London this is impossible, even if one would, partly from the circumscribing effect of bricks and mortar, partly from the dim light of a London distance, and partly from the need of avoiding collisions. One's eyes unconsciously acquire a habit of restricted vision: our observation specialises, like that of the little girl in Mrs. Meynell's book, who beguiled the tedium of her walks by collecting shopkeepers named Jones. Perhaps that is the kind of observation for which we in London have become best suited.

I remember how amazed I was, some years ago, when one clear Sunday morning, as I was walking in Fleet Street, I chanced on looking down Bouverie Street to see, framed between its walls, the Crystal Palace gleaming in the far distance. That, however, was an exceptional sight. Far less uncommon yet quite obvious characteristics cause astonishment when they are pointed out. It comes, for example, as a surprise to many people if you refer to the hill in Piccadilly. "What hill?" they ask. Indeed, if there is one thing more remarkable than one's own ignorance of London, it is that of other people. Walking one day in Cheapside, from west to east, I was struck by the unfamiliar aspect of the building which blocked the end of that thoroughfare. It turned out to be a new set of offices at the foot of Cornhill, and it caused me to wonder how many people shared my belief that as one walks eastwards down Cheapside one ought to have a full view of the Stock Exchange; which is not, as a matter of fact, visible until one is almost out of the Poultry. And this error led me to examine other similar fancies, and in many cases to find them equally wrong. I amused myself in consequence by

drawing up a little paper in London topography, or rather in London observation. Here are a few of the questions which I jotted down: —

1. If the Nelson column were to fall intact upon its side in a due southerly direction, where would Nelson's head lie?

2. If circumstances should confine your perambulations to an area comprised in a radius of three hundred yards from the Griffin in Fleet Street, what streets and how much of them would be open to you? Could you get to the theatre?

3. Give in detail the route of what is in your opinion the shortest walking-distance from (*a*) St. Pancras to Victoria, (*b*) Paddington to London Bridge, (*c*) the Lyceum to Oxford Circus, (*d*) the Zoological Gardens to the Albert Hall, (*e*) the Bank to the Tower, (*f*) Seat P4 in the British Museum Reading Room to seat C7.

4. Between what points of the compass do the following streets run: the Strand, Northumberland Avenue, Fenchurch Street, Edgware Road, Knightsbridge, Tottenham Court Road, Cockspur Street, Bow Street, Whitehall, Westminster Bridge, Waterloo Bridge and London Bridge?

5. Give the right cab fare between Charing Cross and (*a*) the Elephant and Castle, (*b*) the Spaniards, (*c*) Liverpool Street, (*d*) the Marble Arch, (*e*) the Brompton Oratory, (*f*) the People's Palace, (*g*) the Agricultural Hall. Add the cabman's probable demand to each.

6. If you followed that diameter of the four-mile radius which starts from the West Hill, Highgate, where would you collide with the opposite circumference?

7. Does it surprise you to learn that Westminster Bridge, if continued in a straight line for two or three miles on the Surrey side, would run into Tower Bridge, or somewhere very near it?

8. Where are Hanging Sword Alley and Whetstone Park?

Of St. Paul's Cathedral I find it very difficult to write. Within, it is to me the least genial of cathedrals, the least kindly. It has neither tenderness nor mystery. I would not call it exactly hard and churlish, like some of the whitewashed Lutheran temples: it is simply so much noble masonry without sympathy.

Wren, of course, had no religion: one sees that in every church he built. He was a wonderful architect; he heaped stone on stone as no Englishman has ever done, before or since; one feels that he must have known by inspired prevision exactly how the smoke and fog of the future would affect his favourite medium; but he had no religion, no secret places in his soul, no colour. His churches are churches for a business man, and a successful one at that: not for a penitent, not for a perplexed and troubled soul, not for an emotional sufferer. Poor people look out of place in them. Wren's churches are for prosperity.

To make satisfying exteriors — especially to make the right spires — was Wren's happy destiny. He never, or almost never, failed. Within, his churches are for the most part merely consecrated comfortable rooms: without, they are London's most precious, most magical possession. At first they may not please; but — and especially if one studies the city from a height — one comes to realise their beauty and their extraordinary fittingness. On a bright day of scudding clouds, such as I remember in January of this year, when I was sitting in a room at the highest point of the Temple, the spire of a Wren church can have as many expressions, can reflect as many moods, as a beautiful and intelligent woman. I was watching St. Bride's with absolute fascination as it smiled and frowned, doubted and understood.

St. Paul's of course can hardly be ranked with Wren's churches at all: it is so vast, so isolated. It is too vast in its present Anglican hands for human nature's daily needs. The Roman Catholics, by their incense, their confessionals, their constant stream of worshippers, their little side chapels, their many services, and, perhaps most of all, by their broken-light, bring down even their largest cathedrals to reasonable dimensions, so that one does not feel lost in them. They might humanise St. Paul's. But as it is, St. Paul's is a desert: nothing is done for you, and its lighting is almost commercial. The dominant impression it conveys is of vastness: one emerges with no hush on one's soul.

St. Paul's should, I think, be loved from a distance; an interview should not be courted. The triumph of St. Paul's is that, vast and serene, it broods protectively over the greatest city in the world, and is worthy of its office. The dome is magnificent: there is nothing finer: and that to me is St. Paul's — a mighty mothering dome; not cold aisles and monstrous groups of statuary, not a whispering gallery and worried mosaics, not Americans with red guide books and typists eating their lunch. All that I want to forget.

St. Paul's best appeal, true appeal, is external. It has no religious significance to me: it is the artistic culmination of London city, it is the symbol of London. And as such it is always thrilling. One of the best near views is from the footbridge from Charing Cross to Waterloo; one of the best distant views is from Parliament Hill. By no effort of imagination can one think of London without it.

Yet go to St. Paul's one must, if only to reverse this view and see London from its dome. On a clear day, which in London means a windy day, you cannot have a more interesting sight than this great unwieldy city from



ST. PAUL'S FROM THE RIVER

the ball of its sentinel cathedral — all spread out on every side, with a streak of river in the midst: all grey and busy right away to the green fields.

To trace the great roads from this height is one of the most interesting things. For it is pleasant to think that all the roads even of the crowded congested business centre take one in time into the country, into the world, right to the sea. In time, for example, Ludgate Hill is going to be Fleet Street, and Fleet Street the Strand, and the Strand King William Street, and so on to Leicester Square and Coventry Street and Piccadilly; and Piccadilly leads to Hounslow and Staines and the west of England. Behind us is Cannon Street, which leads to London Bridge and the Borough High Street and Tabard Street to Watling Street and Gravesend and Rochester and the Kentish coast: or via London Bridge and the Borough High Street, to Newington Causeway, to Clapham, Epsom, Leatherhead and Dorking to the Sussex coast; or through Guildford to the Hog's Back and Hampshire. Cheapside leads to Cornhill and Leadenhall Street and Aldgate, and Aldgate to the Whitechapel Road and Romford, Brentford, Chelmsford and the east; Bishopsgate leads to Edmonton, Hoddesden, Cheshunt, Ware and the north-east; the City Road leads to Islington, Highgate, and the North; and Cheapside to Holborn, Oxford Street, the Edgware Road, St. Albans and the north-west. From the ball of St. Paul's one can follow all these roads for a little way on their great journeys.

A few years ago such eventualities were not considered as they now are, the Londoner associating liberty only with the rail. But now that the motor car has come, the road has returned to its own again, not only in fact but in our thoughts. No motorist thinks only of the portion of

road that he happens to be on: he looks ahead and thinks of its course and destination. This is good. This is one of the best things that the motor has done. Compared with such an enlargement of vision, such a quickening of the imagination, its speed is unimportant. The motor's great achievement is its gift of England to the English, the home counties to the Londoner.

It is in St. Paul's that our great soldiers and sailors and painters are commemorated. The painters are modest; but the monuments to the warriors are large and florid (rather like the Dutch), usually personifying the hero in action. Nothing is so wrong as for sculpture to perpetuate an arrested movement: great art, and particularly marmorial art, treats of repose; but the sculptors of St. Paul's, the Bacons, and Bailleys, and Westmacotts, did not think so, and we therefore have Sir Ralph Abercromby for ever falling from his horse, and Sir John Moore for ever being just lowered into his grave, though not at all as the poem describes. Latterly, however, taste has improved, for the Wellington monument has dignity and tranquillity, while Lord Leighton's sarcophagus is beautiful.

The old rule which seems to have insisted upon every statue being eight feet high, although doubtless a wise one in so large a building, leads to some rather quaint effects: as when one comes suddenly upon a half-naked Colossus of truculent mien, fit opponent for Hackenschmidt, and finds the name of Samuel Johnson beneath it. Anomalies in marble are so very noticeable. There seems to me to be another of a more serious nature in the bas-relief memorial to the officers and men of the 57th West Middlesex who perished in the Crimea and New Zealand, the subject of which is Christ comforting the mourners: for the logician might so easily point out that had the law of Christ not

been broken the cause of mourning would not have existed. One's feeling is that Christ should not be here: it is not so much over dead soldiers as over the living that He must mourn. But every church which, like St. Paul's, glorifies war and warriors, is of course in a very delicate position. England is, however, the last country in which to say so.

For other memorials to distinguished men one must descend, at a cost of sixpence, into the crypt (the soldiers and sailors above are free), where Sir Christopher Wren lies, and where many of the greatest painters are buried — among them Turner and Reynolds, Lawrence and Millais. Here too lie Nelson and Wellington.

One of the parts of commercial London that I like best is the slope of the hill between St. Paul's and the river. All kinds of old narrow lanes wind down this hill to the water, crossing Upper Thames Street on the way — all strongly stamped by the past and all very busy and noisy. Nowhere in London do the feet of horses make so clattering a disturbance as hereabouts, and the motor vehicle has hardly yet found its way here. These lanes with the odd names — Godliman Street, Benet Lane, Sermon Lane, Trig Lane, Distaff Lane, Little Divinity Lane, Garlick Hill, College Hill, Stew Lane — are all winding and narrow and obsolete, and without exception, contrary to the best interests of business; yet they persist, and one is glad of it. And all make for the wharves and the river, and ultimately the open sea.

The Great Fire made very short work of Thames Street — as indeed a fire always does of riverside buildings — and everything that one now sees dates from the hither side of that disaster. The churches are all Wren's, whose industry amazes more and more: — St. Benet's (where Inigo Jones is buried); St. James's in Garlickhithe (with a figure

of the apostle over its fine assertive clock); St. Michael's, on College Hill, with some carving of Wren's confederate Grinling Gibbons, and a window to Dick Whittington, who was buried here as often as he was Lord Mayor of London. By Cannon Street's arch one passes the very thinnest end that any architectural wedge ever had, and so comes into Lower Thames Street, where we quickly find Wren again — at St. Magnus the Martyr, at the foot of Fish Street Hill, on which the Monument, like a tall bully, lifts its head and lies. St. Magnus's is one of London's larger churches, and in its way is very fine. Miles Coverdale, who gave the English their Bible, is buried here. The glass is not good, not is it good in any Wren church that I have seen, but it rarely reaches a lower point than in St. Dunstan's-in-the-East (which has the beautiful tower). Before we come to this church we pass Pudding Lane, where the Great Fire began (we shall see directly where it stopped), and to Billingsgate fish market. Both the Thames Streets, Upper and Lower, are very genuine, and very interesting, with their warehouses and their wharves; although I should feel there by night that one must meet rats. The whole walk from Blackfriars Station to the Tower is worth taking, with plenty of material to the hand of a Méryon or Muirhead Bone on the way; but at Billingsgate I draw the line — Billingsgate, which is always muddy whatever the weather, and always noisy and slimy and fishy beyond words. One comes away indeed vowing never to eat fish again.

From St. Paul's, when I was last there, I walked to the church of St. Bartholomew the Great in Smithfield, feeling that I needed a little Norman and Early English humanising in the genuine atmosphere of antiquity; for St. Paul's, for all its sacred dust, is too much like the mausoleum of a millionaire Lord Mayor. I walked

through one of the narrow passages into Paternoster Row, and so to Amen Corner and Warwick Lane; where I peeped into Amen Court, that quiet ecclesiastical backwater where St. Paul's canons live, but have at the present moment no Sydney Smith among them, and no Thomas Ingoldsby. I peeped also into Warwick Square, one of whose old residential houses still stands amid the offices, with a top hamper of woodwork and a parliament of pigeons on its coping. And so on into Newgate Street, where all is changing so rapidly — Christ's Hospital being just now (1906) a vast open space, and grim and dignified Newgate prison having given way to the florid new Central Criminal Court in yellow stone with its gold figure of Justice on top. St. Sepulchre's Church has not yet been pulled down, it is true; but I suppose it has merely been overlooked, so noble is it and worthy of preservation.

St. Sepulchre's, whose four vanes and their inability to swing exactly together have made a city proverb, has a long association with crime which, however kindly meant, lends it a sinister air. Its clock for centuries gave the hours to the hangman at Newgate across the way: at first to warn him that it was time to start for Tyburn, and later that the moment was ripe for the execution in the prison itself. Life must have been very interesting and full — to the innocent or undetected — in Holborn and Oxford Street in those old days when condemned men were hanged at Tyburn tree: processions so constantly passing, with every circumstance of publicity and ribaldry. St. Sepulchre's connection with executions did not end at merely giving the time: it had refinements of torture at its fingers' ends. By the zeal of a citizen of London named Robert Dowe, who left a sum of money for the purpose, the clerk of the church was forced to take his bell in hand on the

eve of a hanging, and proceed twice, once at night and once in the morning, to the prison, where, standing beneath the window of the wretch's cell, he gave out certain tolls and called upon him in a dreary rhyme to make his peace with God if he would avoid eternal flames. And then, on the departure of the cart for Tyburn, the clerk had to appear again and offer prayers; and lest any of these searching attentions were omitted or shirked, the Beadle of the Merchant Taylors' Hall was provided with a stipend to see that the clerk duly carried them out with a becoming Christian rigour. So much for St. Sepulchre's official interest in the condemned; but it played also an amateur part in another and prettier, although not much humaner, ritual, for it was from its steps that a nosegay was presented to every traveller to that Tyburn from which none returned.

Our church has fifteenth-century masonry in it, but for the most part is seventeenth, having been destroyed by the Great Fire. St. Sepulchre's was indeed that destroyer's last ecclesiastical victim, for a few yards farther up Giltspur Street, at Pie Corner, it died away and was no more, having raged all the way from Pudding Lane by the Monument. Pie Corner was just by Cock Lane, the scene, in 1762, of the most ridiculous imposture which ever laid London by the heels — the Cock Lane ghost. When last I stood looking down this lane, which now belongs almost entirely to commerce, a catsmeat man went by, pushing a barrow and calling his wares, and it seemed he must have walked straight out of one of Hogarth's pictures.

I have said in an earlier chapter that Shepherd's Market in Mayfair gives one the best impression at this moment of the busy shopkeeping London of the Augustan essayists.



SAINT HELENA

AFTER THE PICTURE BY PAULO VERONESE IN THE NATIONAL GALLERY

The best idea of a London of an earlier time that still remains, is I think to be found in Cloth Fair and Bartholomew Close, where sixteenth-century houses still stand, and sixteenth-century narrownesses and dirt are everywhere. If there is the true old London anywhere, it is in the passages on the north side of St. Bartholomew the Great.

But before we reach Bartholomew Close we must pass St. Bartholomew's Hospital, or Barts' as it is called, on the south side of Smithfield, one of London's great temples of healing. Its square in summer is quite a little park, with its patients taking the air and the children playing among them, and there is always a bustle of students and nurses and waiting-maids, crossing and re-crossing from one grey building to another.

The way to Bartholomew Close is through the hospital to Little Britain, and so into this ramifying old-world region, once a centre of printers (Benjamin Franklin learned his trade there) and now given up to warehouses and offices and in its narrow parts to small shops; but never for an instant belonging to the twentieth century or even the nineteenth.

The church itself — St. Bartholomew the Great — is one of the architectural jewels of the city. Not that it is so perfect or so beautiful; but that it is so curious, so genuine, so un-Wrenlike, so unexpected, so modest. I think its humility and friendliness are its greatest charm. It hides away behind West Smithfield's houses, with its own little crazy graveyard before it, but keeps its door always open. You enter and are in the middle ages.

I am not attempting to describe the church, which is a very attractive jumble of architectural styles, with a triforium that one longs to walk round, and noble doors,

and massive Norman pillars, and a devious ambulatory. Indeed there is no need, for no London church is so often depicted. On the morning I was last there it was like students' day at the National Gallery, as many as four young women being hard at work transferring different aspects to paper, while two others were engaged on Prior Bolton's window, which is a kind of private box in the south side of the choir, built into one of the arches of the triforium, where this prior, who flourished early in the sixteenth century, may have sat.

An older relic still is the coloured tomb of the founder — in the sanctuary — the merry and melodious Rahere, who founded the Priory of St. Bartholomew in the reign of Henry I. Seven Henries later it was of course dissolved. Having loitered sufficiently in the church, one should walk round its exterior and make a point of seeing the sexton's house (to which I have already alluded) which clings to the north wall as a child to its mother — the quaintest old house in London, with its tiny Tudor bricks and infinitesimal windows.

Cloth Fair begins here, a congeries of narrow streets and dreadful old women, where once was the centre of the drapery trade that now flourishes in St. Paul's Churchyard. From Cloth Fair I passed into Smithfield's large vacancy, where Bartholomew Fair — which was in its serious side a fair for cloth — used to be held every Bartholomew's Day until 1855, when the law stepped in and said No. The pleasure portion was the most extraordinary chaos of catch-penny booths, theatricals, *ferœ naturæ*, wild beasts, cheap jacks and charlatans that England has ever seen; and I like to think that Charles Lamb led William Wordsworth through it in 1802.

"And were men and women really willing to burn for

their faith?" one asks, as one stands here amid the railway vans. How strange, to-day, it all seems! Unless something very wonderful and miraculous happens there will never be another martyr burnt at Smithfield. Martyrdom is out of fashion; and yet that was only three hundred and fifty years ago.

Through the fleshly horrors of Smithfield Market, where Hebrew middlemen smoke large cigars, I advise no one to wander: it is discipline enough for us to have been created carnivorous; and Charterhouse Square, whither we are now bound, can be reached easily by Long Lane and Hayne Street, well outside the domain of the carcase and the bloodstained porter.

To Charterhouse Square, a region of peace, within sound of Aldersgate's commercial zeal, we are coming, not to see its hotels for city men, or the Merchant Taylors' school, or even the two very charming Georgian houses that are left, but solely to explore the monastery that gives it its name. After a curiously varied career, the Charterhouse is now fixed (I hope for many centuries to come, although the gate porter tells me alarming stories of offers from speculative builders) as an almshouse for old gentlemen. It was built in the fourteenth century as a monastery for Carthusians. Then came the dread Henry VIII with his odd and implacable conscience, hardly less devastating than the speculative builder or the modern County Councillor, who cast out the monks and beheaded the prior, and made the house a private residence for rich courtiers — Sir Thomas Audley, Lord North, the Duke of Northumberland, the Duke of Norfolk, the Duke of Suffolk in turn occupying it and entertaining there. But in 1611 Mr. Thomas Sutton bought it and endowed it with a sum of £200,000 as a hospital and a school. In the school

forty boys were to be educated free, with sixty others who paid fees; in the hospital "eighty gentlemen by descent and in poverty" were to be maintained — above the age of fifty, if sound, but of forty, if maimed in war. Both intentions were admirably realised, although changes have come in. In 1872, for example, the school was moved to Godalming, and in 1885 the number of pensioners was reduced by twenty-five owing to loss of revenue. But the fifty-five that remain could not spend their declining days more sweetly and serenely than within these grey walls, with their comfortable rooms and the best fires I saw in London this last winter.

The Charterhouse is very beautiful, very quiet. Its most famous pensioner, although an imaginary one, will always be Colonel Newcome — a proper tribute to the genius of Thackeray, who was educated at the school here. Among its pensioners in real life have been such different dramatists as Elkanah Settle and John Maddison Morton, the author of *Box and Cox*. Among famous schoolboys of the Charterhouse — old Carthusians, as we call them — some of whom are celebrated in the little passage that leads to the chapel, are John Leech and George Grote, Addison and Steele, Crashaw and Blackstone, John Wesley and Sir Henry Havelock.

The last time I went to the Charterhouse was the first day of spring this year, and when I came out the sky was so clear and the air so soft that I gave up all my other plans, and turning into Aldersgate, walked all the way to Highgate: up Aldersgate, which is now wholly commercial but which in Tudor times was fashionable; up the Goswell Road (where Mr. Pickwick lodged with Mrs. Bardell); along Upper Street, that fine old-world highway; past Islington Green, now a municipal enclosure; through Highbury; up the long Holloway Road (where I weakened



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and took a tram); up Highgate Hill; and so to that healthy northern suburb where time still tarries. All this I did for old sake's sake, because it was at Highgate, on the very top of the hill, that I used to live — just north of the Grove, where Carlyle heard Coleridge discourse endlessly of the sum-jective and the om-jective.

To me Highgate is still London's most fascinating suburb, for it has a quietness and an unpretentiousness that are foreign to Hampstead. On how many sweet May evenings have I walked along Hampstead Lane to the Spaniard's, past Caen's dark recesses, where it is whispered badgers are still to be found, and sitting in one of the tavern's arbours, have heard the nightingale singing in Bishop's Wood. The Spaniard's in those days, ten years ago, was one of the best of the old London inns still surviving — without the German waiter and the coloured wine glasses to bring in the false new note. And I was never tired of leading my friends thither to show them Dick Turpin's knife and fork in a case on the wall. Sometimes we would walk on to Jack Straw's Castle, along that fine high ridgeway across the Heath known as the Spaniard's Road, and watch London twinkling far away beneath us. Or disregarding Jack Straw's Castle (where the Fourth Party were wont to recuperate and plan new audacities), we would plunge down from Constable's Knoll of Scotch firs, over rough sandy bridle paths, to the Bull and Bush in the hollow at North End, and there find refreshment.

I am speaking of the spring and summer; but Hampstead Heath is not less attractive in winter too, and in winter there used to be at the Bull and Bush a brew of barley wine, as it was called, that was very warming. Such brews are no longer common. What one misses from London windows in winter is any alluring invitation to hot

cordial drinks. The publicans announce the commencement of the goose club, but there is no longer any tidings of mulled ale. It is sad but true that the Londoner's — indeed I might say the Englishman's — first and last word in alcoholic cheer is whisky. Even in the coldest weather no stand is made for the genial beverages of the past. To the end Dickens brewed punch and saw that it was good; but with Dickens, or very shortly after, passed away all interest in that enkindling Christianising bowl. They still mix it at the Cheshire Cheese; and as the dying year 1905 turned for the last time upon his pillow, a glass of it was handed to me by the host in whose company (and that of some hundreds of others) I was honouring the obsequies; but punch is rarely seen, and I am sorry for it.

And who now asks for a port wine negus? But when I first came to London in 1892, in the good old days when Furnivall's Inn still stood, and Ridler's Hotel beamed hospitably across Holborn, I used to frequent a little inner sitting-room in that hostelry, where long clay pipes were provided, and where a stately waiter, more like the then Speaker of the House of Commons (now Lord Peel) than any waiter has a right to be, used to bring a negus that was worth drinking, with cinnamon floating on the top like driftwood after a wreck.

Will there never come a mixer of hot and kindling beverages who, perhaps taking a Dickensian name, will wean the world from an undiscriminating devotion to whisky? Pineapple rum hot, with three lumps — nowhere now can one drink this fragrant concoction. And the other pleasantly-sounding comforters with which Mr. Pickwick and his friends and the people they met on the top of coaches were wont to make themselves happy and aromatic — where are they? All past, with the stage coaches

and the post chaises. This is an age of champagne and whisky, motor cars and religious novels. Mr. Pickwick and his leisure and his punch are no more.

In Highgate and Hampstead I should love to linger: but they are outside the radius so far as this book is concerned. Yet of Hampstead I must say a word here, if only to correct the suggestion that it is pretentious. Pretentious only in its modern roads — its Fitzjohn's Avenues, and so forth: there is no pretentiousness about Church Row, which, until the flats were built on the north side, was the most beautiful English street I ever saw, or expect to see, and is still well worth climbing a hill ten times as steep as Hampstead's. With this early simple part of Hampstead, and the little passages and cottages between Church Row and the pond on the summit, the memory of Kate Greenaway is in my mind inseparably bound. To think of one is to think of the other. One feels that she must have lived here; as indeed she did — just below Church Row, in Frognal, but not, I grieve to say, in an old house. Hampstead has had many literary and artistic associations, from Keats (in Well Walk) to George du Maurier (in the Grove), but Kate Greenaway is my Hampstead symbol.

I remember what a shock it was to hear that she was dead. For one had never thought of death in connection with this serene and joyous artist. Her name had called up for so long only pleasant, sunny associations: memories of green meadows with grave little girls and boys a-maying; quiet, restful rooms (in Church Row!) with tiny fireplaces, daffodils in blue vases on the high mantelpieces, and grave little girls and boys a-playing; and trim streets, where everything was well-kept and well-swept, and all the roofs were red and all the garden gates and fences green, and more grave little girls carried dolls, and more grave little

boys rolled hoops, and very young mothers with high waists gossiped over their grave little babies' infinitesimal heads. Some such scenes as these had for twenty years been rising before one whenever Kate Greenaway's name was heard, bringing with them a gentle breath of ancient repose and simplicity and a faint scent of pot pourri. And to think the hand that devised this innocent communism of quaintness and felicity, this juvenile Arcadia, was still for ever!

That was in 1901, when for some years Miss Greenaway had not been the power that once she was. Her greatest triumphs were in the early eighties, when she illustrated Ann and Jane Taylor's *Original Poems*, and wrote and illustrated verses of her own writing, and put forth every Christmas a little almanack, with scenes fitting to every month and delicate and dainty borders of the old-world flowers she loved best. It might almost be said that she invented the daffodil. That was the time when flowers were being newly discovered, and while the æsthetes were worshipping the sunflower and the lily Miss Greenaway was bidding the cheeriest little daisies spring from the grass and the chubbiest little roses burst from the bushes, and teaching thousands of uninitiated eyes how beautiful the daffodil is. Wordsworth had done so before, it is true; but between Wordsworth and Kate Greenaway how wide a gulf of stuffy taste was fixed—the forties, the fifties, the sixties, and the seventies! Kate Greenaway came like a fresh southern breeze after a fog. The æsthetes were useful, but they were artificial: they never attained to her open-air radiances. In the words of a critic whom I was reading somewhere the other evening, Kate Greenaway newly dressed the children of England; and the effects of her influence will probably never be lost. And to a great extent she refurnished England too. There is not an intelligent upholsterer or furniture dealer in the

country at this moment whose warehouses do not bear witness to Miss Greenaway's unobtrusive, yet effectual, teaching. She was the arch-priestess of happy simplicity.

As an illustrator of dramatic stories, such as the domestic tragedies set forth by the sisters Taylor, or Bret Harte's *Queen of Pirate Isle*, or *The Pied Piper of Hamelin*, Miss Greenaway was not quite successful. Her genius bent rather to repose than action; or, at least, to any action more complex than skipping or dancing, picking flowers, crying, or taking tea. (No one in the whole history of art has drawn more attractive tea tables — old Hampstead tea tables, I am sure.) Drama was beyond her capacity, and her want of sympathy with anything unhappy or forceful also unfitted her. Her pictures prove her the soul of gentleness. Had she set out to make a tiger it would have purred like the friendliest tabby; nothing could induce her pencil to abandon its natural bent for soft contours and grave kindlinesses. Hence her crones were merely good-natured young women doing their best — and doing it very badly — to look old; her witches were benevolent grandmothers. To illustrate was not her *métier*. But to create — that she did to perfection. She literally made a new world where sorrow never entered — nothing but the momentary sadness of a little child — where the sun always shone, where ugliness had no place and life was always young. No poet can do much more than this. It seems to me that among the sweet influences of the nineteenth century Kate Greenaway stands very high. The debt we owe to her is beyond payment; but I hope that some memorial will be considered. Randolph Caldecott has a memorial in the crypt of St. Paul's; Lewis Carroll in the Great Ormond Street Children's Hospital; Kate Greenaway ought to have a group of statuary (in the manner of the Hans Christian Andersen monument) in Church Row, Hampstead.

CHAPTER XII

CHEAPSIDE AND THE CITY CHURCHES

Crowded pavements — Sunday in the City — A receded tide of worshippers — Temples of Cheery Ease — Two Weekday Congregations — St. Stephen's, Walbrook — Bishopsgate Churches — The Westminster Abbey of the City — Houndsditch toy shops — Postmen's Park — Bunhill Fields — The City Road — Colebrooke Row and Charles Lamb — London Pigeons — The Guildhall — A few words on Museums — The Carnavalet in Paris — The Lord Mayor in State — The City and Literature — In the wake of John Gilpin — To Tottenham and Edmonton — A Discovery and a Disillusionment

WE are now in a part of London that really is too busy to wander in. London neither likes you to walk faster than itself nor slower; it likes you to adopt its own pace. In the heart of the city you cannot do this and see anything. To study Cheapside and its narrow tributaries, the very narrowness of which is eloquent of the past and at the same time so much a part of the present that it is used in a thoroughly British manner to imprison carts and carters for five or six hours a day, you must choose a Sunday; but if you can loiter in these parts on a Sunday without becoming so depressed as to want to scream aloud, you are made of sterner stuff than I. For my part, I would rather be actually bruised by the jostlings of Cheapside on Monday than have solitary elbow room there on the day of rest, when the cheerful shops are shut and the dreary bells ring out. For the city on Sunday is to me a wilderness of



THE DEATH OF PROCRIS

AFTER THE PICTURE BY PIERO DI COSIMO IN THE NATIONAL GALLERY

melancholy. Church bells are tolerable only when one hears a single peal: to hear many in rivalry is to suffer.

The city churches are many and are well cared for; but their day is over. During the week we are too busy making money, or not making it, to spare time for religion; while on Sunday we are elsewhere. What do these churches here? one asks. Other gods reign here. I do not wish to suggest that there are not city men who value the opportunity which the open doors of the churches give them for a little escape from Mammon during the day; but for the most part the city church strikes one as a monument to the obsolete. It belongs so completely to the period when merchants not only made their money in the city but lived there too; before Sydenham Hill and Brighton, Chislehurst and Weybridge, were discovered. No one lives in the city any longer, save the Lord Mayor and a few caretakers; and all the gentlemen who would once have convoyed their wives and families up the aisles into the lethargic pews are now either doing the same thing in the suburbs or evading that duty on the golf links.

Times change: the city church remains, calm and self-possessed, offering sanctuary to anyone who needs it; but one cannot believe that were they all pulled down to-morrow anyone would really resent it except a few simple-hearted old-fashioned city gentlemen and an æsthetic minority writing to the papers from Kensington, while the competition for the sites on which to erect commodious and convenient business premises would be instant and terrific. Personally I rarely go into the city without spending a few minutes in one or other of these abodes of peace; but that is a circumstance of no value, because I go to the city only out of curiosity. I am not of it; indeed I am lost in it and I can find myself again only by resting awhile in

one of these very formal havens. Silent they are not: the roar of the city cannot be quite shut out; but one hears it only as one hears in a shell the murmur of the sea.

Comfort — ecclesiastical comfort — is the note of the city church. It reflects the mind of the comfortable citizen for whom it was built, who liked things plain but good, and though he did not want so far to misbehave as to think of religion as a cheerful topic, was still averse from Calvinistic gloom. (In St. Michael's on College Hill, for instance, is a notice over the door bearing the congenial promise to the congregation: "Plenteousness within His palaces.") The city church, although unmistakably a temple for the worship of the God of the Old Testament, has yet a hint of the kindliness that would belong to the New if Christians would only permit it. Take for example St. Mary Woolnoth's, just by the Mansion House. It is light, almost gay, but, I hasten to add, without a suggestion of the gaudiness of Rome. The black woodwork and the coloured walls have a pleasant effect. The pulpit is an interesting example of the cabinetmaker's art. There is seating accommodation for very few persons, and that guards against overcrowding. The heating arrangements are good. St. Botolph's, in Aldgate, at the corner of Houndsditch, is another bright and cheery little church. This has a gallery and some elaborate plaster work on the ceiling. Comfort and well-being are strongly in evidence — not to the point of decimating a golf links, of course, but comfort and well-being none the less.

On Sundays these churches may be filled, for aught I know; but my experience of their week-day services is not happy. One day this spring I looked into St. Lawrence, Jewry, just by the Guildhall, and found a portly dignified cleric repeating the commandments to a congregation of

four. I counted it — four, each sitting in a different part of the comfortable cushioned church, as far from the others as might be. Another day, during Lent, I looked into St. Margaret Pattens in Eastcheap, at the corner of Rood Lane, and from the ceremonial and incense thought myself in Rome. But the congregation was minute.

One of the most unexpected of London churches is St. Stephen's, Walbrook (behind the Mansion House), into the side of which a bookshop has been built. Without, it is nothing uncommon and its spire is ordinary Wren; but within it is very imposing and rather fine, having a lofty dome and a number of stately pillars. There is of course no religious feeling in it, but as a piece of grandiose architecture it has merit. I do not, however, agree with a London friend whose advice to me was to disregard all the city churches so long as I saw this one. At the opposite pole is St. Ethelburga's in Bishopsgate Street Within, a very modest shrinking little fane. Like All Hallows, Barking, St. Ethelburga's escaped the Fire, and it stands, a relic of Early English architecture, in the midst of the busiest part of the city. But beyond its isolation, age, and simplicity, it has little to recommend it. Close by is Crosby Hall, the remains of Crosby Place, where Richard III once sojourned, and where, it is possible, parts of *Utopia* were written. After many vicissitudes and much renovation it is now a thriving restaurant. Its medievalism is perhaps a shade too much insisted upon, but certain genuine traces of antiquity still remain to lend a savour to one's chop. The famous city church of St. Helen's is in Great St. Helen's Place, a little to the south, and it is worth visiting for the tombs alone — for here lie London's greatest merchants, from Sir Thomas Gresham downwards: it is the Westminster Abbey of the city, the Valhalla of commerce. It

has, however, one poet too; for the possibility that a William Shakespeare who lived in the parish in 1598 was the Swan of Avon has led an American gentleman to erect a window to the dramatist.

Elsewhere I have said something of Norton Folgate and Shoreditch, the northern continuation of Bishopsgate Street. I might here remark that Houndsditch, which really was once a ditch, just outside the wall, is now the centre of the toy and cheap jewellery trade. It was in a shop there, after much hunting, that I ran down one of the old weather-cottages, with a little man and a little woman to swing in and out and foretell rain and shine — wrongly, for the most part, but picturesquely.

In Leadenhall Street one may see where Lamb's India House stood; and Leadenhall Market, which fills several estuaries here, is interesting for its live-stock shops, where one may buy puppies and bantams, Persian cats and bull-finches, and even, I believe, foxes for the chase — if one sinks so low. Cornhill has two churches almost touching each other — St. Peter's and St. Michael's — but neither is interesting, although St. Michael's tower can catch the sun very pleasantly.

For the most part the city church no longer has its graveyard; or if it has, the graves have been levelled and a little green space for luncheon-hour recreation has been made instead. One of the pleasantest of these is that of St. Botolph Without, Aldersgate, which is known as Postmen's Park. It is here that the late G. F. Watts, the great painter, erected memorials to certain lowly heroes and heroines not in either of the heroic services, who saved Londoners' lives and perished in the effort. If anyone has a strong taste for graveyards he should certainly visit Bunhill Fields at Finsbury — if only to lose it. A crazy



ST. DUNSTAN'S-IN-THE-EAST

dirty place is this, with its myriad stones saturated with London soot and all awry, and the hum of factories on the northern side. Defoe's tomb is here, with an obelisk over it, and here also lie Bunyan and Isaac Watts, and William Blake and Thomas Stothard, two gentle old men who were rivals only in their painting of Chaucer's Pilgrims; but one comes out in the depths of depression and had better perhaps not have entered. Opposite is a little museum of relics of John Wesley, whose statue is there too. Another great spiritual man, George Fox, lies close by, in the Friends' burial ground; but the Friends' museum is not here but in Devonshire House, in Bishopsgate Street Without, where many very interesting prints and books and pamphlets of the quiet folk may be seen.

From Bunhill Fields one may climb the City Road on a tram — the City Road, once important, once having its place in the most popular comic song of the day, but now a kind of wilderness. The Eagle is now an ordinary public house, the Grecian's Corinthian period is over; and when I was here last, that most dismal sight, the demolition of a church, was to be seen. But the City Road is worth traversing if only for Colebrooke Row, at the end of which, in the last house on the north side, adjoining Duncan Terrace and next a ginger-beer factory, Charles Lamb once lived, in the days before the New River was covered over; and it was down Lamb's front garden that George Dyer walked when he fell into that stream.

Colebrooke Row is still old-fashioned; hardly anything has been done beyond covering the waterway. I descended to the banks of the canal, which, in its turn, runs at right angles beneath the New River, and talked with the captain of the tug which pulls the barges through the long low tunnel. And then I climbed to Colebrooke

Row again and roamed about Upper Street and all that is left of Islington Green, where a statue of Sir Hugh Myddleton stands, and wondered at the success with which Islington has kept itself a self-contained town entirely surrounded by houses, and walked awhile in Islington churchyard, and then descended the squalid heights of Pentonville to King's Cross. I cannot call either Pentonville or Clerkenwell interesting, except for preserving so much of the London of a hundred years ago.

But meanwhile we are due in Cheapside again.

The British Museum has the first name for pigeons in London — the pigeon being our sacred bird, our ibis — and truly there are none bigger: they have breasts like cannon balls; but the Guildhall's birds are even tamer. In crossing the courtyard in front of the Guildhall one really has to step carefully to avoid treading on them, so casual are they and so confident that you will behave.

The Guildhall has in its basement a collection of articles relating to the history of the city, which are sufficiently interesting to be well worth a visit. Relics of Roman occupation; old inn signs, including the Boar's Head in Eastcheap which Falstaff frequented; instruments of punishment from Newgate; old utensils and garments; prints and broadsheets; and so forth. But that is not enough. London should certainly have a museum of some magnitude devoted wholly to its own wonderful history. That the Guildhall alone, in its very small subterranean way, should have to carry out this duty is yet another proof of the national want of interest in the past. What I said about statues in an earlier chapter applies equally to museums. Here again the French show us the way, although of course we shall not take it. Every nation, every city, has what it wants, and if London, the capital

of the world, had wanted a museum to illustrate its history, it would have had one. But it wanted nothing so unpractical, so beside the mark, and it never will. This is partly because a London museum would have to spring into being at the command of public-spirited Londoners; and there are none. There are residents in various parts of London; but when it comes to the point there are no Londoners. At least, there is no one of whom you could say — "He is so proud of London that he will do something for it." You can find the man who in his Sydenham home at night, after dinner, is proud of the city; you can find the Town Councillor at Battersea who is proud of Battersea; but that is all. There are no essential Londoners.

If anyone wishes to see a museum illustrating the history of a city, let him go to the Carnavalet in Paris — the Musée Historique de la Ville. The Carnavalet is interesting for two reasons. One is that it is filled with interesting things; another that these things are preserved in a house of great interest — once inhabited by Madame de Sévigné. It was built in the middle of the sixteenth century and stands in the midst of architectural coevals in an out-of-the-way part of the Faubourg of St. Antoine. Museums, I am convinced, should if possible be old houses: like the Cluny, also in Paris, and, at Antwerp, the Plantin; or, in a small way, like the Wordsworth Museum at Dove Cottage, or the Carlyle Museum in Cheyne Row. But where is the old house in London to turn into an historical museum? "What's not destroyed by Time's avenging hand?

Where's Troy, and where's the maypole in the Strand?"

There is, it is true, the old Tudor building that is wrongly known as Cardinal Wolsey's Palace, by Temple Bar; but that is very small. I can think only of Staple Inn.

Carlyle's house is, indeed, an excellent model in miniature of the Carnavalet. Each is dominated by a single idea. Private piety supplies both; but I imagine that the authorities of the French museum have a considerable fund with which to make purchases. If it were decided to establish an historical museum of London, a careful study of the Carnavalet might well precede active operations. At the Carnavalet you begin with Roman and Merovingian antiquities and end with relics of almost the present day, all associated with the history of Paris. Amid the ordinary rank and file of curiosities, such as models and prints, one is continually coming upon something of poignant and unique interest: the chair in which Béranger died; the handle of Marat's bathroom; the rope-ladder with which Latude escaped from the Bastille; Napoleon's dressing-case; a painted mask of Voltaire, sardonic and alert, very nigh life; a lace collar of Marie Antoinette; the death-mask of Sainte-Beuve; Louis XVI's signed order to the defenders of the Tuileries to cease firing; several of Madame de Sévigné's letters; Napoleon's death-mask; Balzac's bedroom-door; relics of Madame Roland; and so forth. At every turn one is brought face to face with some vivid fact. After half a dozen visits to the Carnavalet one would know Paris intimately in all her stages and have also a quickened interest in her greatest sons.

One is often much less struck in a museum by what is preserved than by what is absent. If these little things have been preserved, one thinks, where are the more considerable ones? For example, when one sees such an article as the handle of Marat's bathroom, which personally I do not greatly care for or value, and which perhaps might as well be at Madame Tussaud's, our national museum of morbid relics, one asks oneself the question. Where



THE MADONNA AND CHILD, WITH ST. JOHN AND ST. CATHERINE

AFTER THE PICTURE BY TITIAN IN THE NATIONAL GALLERY

is the bath itself? If any tangible reminder of Charlotte Corday's crime had to be kept, why was it the bathroom handle? It is true that she had to turn it with her avenging hand (one would give something to know how long her hand paused on it), but had she not a weapon? And was not the "squat individual" in a bath — a great indestructible vessel of metal? Where is that? No matter: I do not want to see Marat's bath, or the Corday's knife. None the less one does want to know what has become of certain imperishable things, and perhaps the establishment of a London museum might bring some of them to light. Where are Dr. Johnson's cudgels? Where are his wigs? Where are the other old signboards? The iron figures of St. Dunstan's in Fleet Street, which used to beat out the hours — the figures the removal of which brought Charles Lamb to tears — are now, I believe, in a garden in Regent's Park. They would, I have no doubt, be ceded to the museum at once. And, to leave London for the moment, where is the bowl in which Gray's cat was drowned? Where is William Beldham's bat, described with such reverence by John Mitford? It would be extremely interesting anyway if some kind of a census of such personal relics could be taken. These are the things that such a director as the Carnavalet enjoys would bring together.

I do not know how museums are begun, but one way would be to approach the task in the spirit of the Rev. James Granger. One would take a representative social history of London, such as Besant's, and make a note of all articles that would illustrate the text — utensils, weapons, books, pictures, portraits, relics. Gradually one would acquire a sound nucleus, and thenceforward all would be simple. In other words, a good museum is a Grangerised copy of life.

The Lord Mayor's departure for or from the Guildhall is a piece of civic pomp that never fails to please the tolerant observer. He drives in a golden chariot, with four horses to draw it and two footmen to stand behind; while an officer in a cocked hat, carrying a sword, rides on in front, and mounted policemen serve as an escort. The Lord Mayor climbs in first, a figure of medieval splendour, in robes and furs and golden chain, more like a Rabbi in a Rembrandt picture than a London magistrate about to send a costermonger to prison; then another elderly and august masquerader is pushed in; and then the mace bearer is added, holding that bauble so that its head is well out of the window. The golden carriage, which is on cee springs and was built to carry Cinderella and none other, swings like a cradle as these medievalists sink into their seats. The powdered footmen leap to their station at the back; the coachman (who has recently figured on the London hoardings with a recommendation for metal polish, and is more than conscious of his identity) cracks his whip; and the pageant is complete. Then the crowd of cynical Londoners — porters, clerks, errand boys, business men, who have, as Londoners always will, found time to observe the spectacle (and it is all one to them whether it is a Lord Mayor or a horse down) — melts, and the twentieth century once more resumes its sway.

I am quite aware that I am treating the city too lightly; but it cannot be helped. One chapter is useless: it wants many books. No sooner does one begin to burrow beneath the surface of it into the past than one realises how fascinating but also how gigantic is the task before one. Reasons of space, apart from other causes, have held my pen. The literary associations of the city alone are endless. It is in Threadneedle Street that Lamb's old South Sea House

stood; in Leadenhall Street we have just seen the modern representative of his East India House. It was in a house in Birchin Lane that the infant Macaulay, opening the door to his father's friend Hannah More, asked her to step in and wait while he fetched her a glass of old spirits, such as they drank in *Robinson Crusoe*. It was at the corner of Wood Street that Wordsworth's poor Susan imagined herself in the country; and here still stands a famous city tree, but this January (1906) has seen its limbs sadly lopped, and it will be years before it recovers any of its old beauty.

It was in Cheapside that John Gilpin lived. I once made an interesting little journey from his house, which properly was at the corner of Paternoster Row, opposite the statue of Sir Robert Peel, in order to follow his great ride. It was some years ago, before the present building superseded the old: the shop part was then a bookseller's, and above were various tenants, among them an aged instructor in the language of chivalry and Spain. It seemed to me that it would be an amusing thing to proceed on foot from John Gilpin's to the Bell of Edmonton, in the wake, so to speak, of this centaur *manquè;* and indeed it was, and more so, for it led to a grievous discovery.

With the exception of the old parish churches that rise here and there from the waste of newer masonry, there now remains little between Cheapside and Tottenham that the Gilpins would recognise. The course of the highway is the same, but since their jaunt to Edmonton most of the houses have been built, and rebuilt, and built again; railways have burrowed under or leapt across the road; tram metals have been laid down; fire-stations have arisen; and lamp-posts, like soldiers, have stepped out to line the pavements. These changes would hold the Gilpins spellbound

were they suddenly re-incarnated to drive to Edmonton again to-day. Most, perhaps, would they marvel at the bicycles darting like dragon-flies between the vehicles, and the onset of the occasional motor car. Probably had motor cars come in in John Gilpin's day he would never have essayed that ride at all. If the braying of an ass were too much for his horsemanship, what of the horn and the exhaust pipe and the frantic machinery of the new vehicles? The press of people would amaze them too, and the loss of green meadows sadden them. On the other hand, the absence of turnpike gates and charges would go far to restore gladness to Mrs. Gilpin's frugal mind.

By the time Tottenham was reached, however, they all would be more at home again. The edge of their wonder would have been taken off, and familiar landmarks coming into view would cheer them. The broad road of the comfortable Tottenham of to-day was not broader in 1750, which was, I estimate, approximately the date of the great expedition. On the common I found two goats feeding, and there were surely goats in 1750. The Cross stood then where it now stands, albeit in the interim the renovator may have touched it; and there were of yore the roadside trees, though not, perhaps, so severely pollarded as now. Where there is absolutely no change at all, save faint traces of age, is in the two rows of almshouses — those of Nicholas Reynards, built in 1736, and those of Balthazar Sanchez, for eight poor men and women, built in 1600. Many of the square red-brick houses on each side of the road date from far earlier than 1750. Here, for instance, is one with a sundial bearing the year 1691. The inns, too, are in many cases merely re-faced (how much to their disadvantage!) but there are a few butchers' shops that seem to have undergone no modification. Butchers are

under no compulsion to march with the times: civilisation or no civilisation, meat is meat and you must have it.

North of Tottenham the air of prosperity disappears, and a suggestion of squalor is perceptible. Deserted houses are common, the inns are poverty-stricken, the impression that one is in a decaying neighbourhood is unavoidable. The Bell at Edmonton has now a stucco front, and if it were not for the fresco depicting John Gilpin at full gallop, one would deny that it could be the same house from whose balcony Mistress Gilpin watched her husband. Edmonton itself is a mile farther on the road. More decay is here. A strip of the Wash is still left, and a butcher's cart splashes through it, but the low level railway passes over the larger portion. The Cross Keys looks hospitable, but the largest house in the village, once a substantial mansion graced with a sundial, is now surmounted by three brass balls. The glory of Edmonton has departed. Indeed, there is no more emphatic example of a decayed neighbourhood than this. Beautiful Georgian houses in their own grounds, with spreading cedars on the lawn and high fruit walls, can be rented at a ridiculously low rate. Once they were the homes of retired citizens and men of leisure and wealth; now they have fallen to market gardeners. London is like that: she has no pity, no sentiment, no care for the past. She will abandon and forget old associations instantly, at the mere sound of the words "convenience" and "utility" or "good form"; she will create a new residential neighbourhood almost in a single night, and never give the old another thought. It having been decreed that Liverpool Street is not a gentleman's line — at least, that no gentleman travelling from it can buy a ticket for any station nearer London than (say) Bishop's Stortford — the decay of Edmonton

and Enfield, Waltham Cross and neighbourhood, must follow.

So much for the route. Now for my grievous discovery. Briefly, my grievous discovery was this — that the Wash is a mile farther from London than the Bell. To understand its significance we must turn to the ballad of the Gilpins. At present it sounds a little enough matter, and yet, as will be seen, the reputation of a poet is thereby jeopardised and another illusion threatened with extinction.

The chaise and pair to contain Mrs. Gilpin and her three children and Mrs. Gilpin's sister and her child, drew up just three doors from John's shop, and the party took their seats there. It was a bright morning in the summer of 1750 or thereabouts. Mr. Gilpin would have accompanied them, but he was delayed by three customers whom he valued too much to entrust to his apprentice. Then — after an interval, say, of half an hour, — he started too. His horse began by pacing slowly over the stones, but immediately the road became smoother he trotted, and then, thinking very little of his rider, broke into a gallop. Neither curb nor rein being of any service, Mr. Gilpin took to the mane. This gallop, as I understand the ballad, the horse kept up all the way to Edmonton and Ware and back again. But if John proceeded at this breakneck pace, how is it that the six persons in the chaise and pair reached Edmonton before him, and were able to watch his mad career from the balcony?

How was it that Mrs. Gilpin reached the Bell first? The natural answer to this problem is that John Gilpin took a roundabout course. Indeed, we know that he passed through Islington, whence, presumably, the traveller to Edmonton would proceed by way of the Seven Sisters Road, or even the Essex Road, and so into Tottenham, which from Cheapside is less direct a course than by way

of Threadneedle Street, Bishopsgate, Shoreditch, Kingsland Road, and Stamford Hill. But Gilpin must have made a wider *détour* even than this, because, according to the ballad, he came to the Wash before he came to the Bell. This means he was approaching Edmonton from the north, because as the exploration of Edmonton revealed, the Wash is a mile farther from London than the Bell. Very well, then; Mrs. Gilpin in a loaded chaise reached the Bell sooner than her husband on a galloping horse, for the reason that he chose a devious course; and the poet's reputation is saved.

"Let me see, how was it," now whispers the devil's advocate, "that John did not stop at Edmonton to dine?" Because, I reply, quoting the ballad,

"his owner had a house
Full ten miles off at Ware."

The horse, then, was making for his stable at Ware. But Ware is thirteen miles farther north than Edmonton, on the same road out of London. So, although horses that run away to their own stables usually run straight, Mr. Gilpin, when he passed the Bell, was riding south, full speed in the direction of London again. Topography is conclusive; there is no argument against it. But, it may be urged, perhaps it was another Ware. That is unlikely, for is not the Johnny Gilpin an inn just outside the town to this day, and do not the people of Ware show the house where the Calendar dwelt, now a draper's? These unwilling eyes have seen both. One word more. Edmonton is seven miles from London, and Ware is thirteen from Edmonton, twenty in all, and it is twenty miles back again. John Gilpin's horse, a Calendar's hack, covered the distance at a gallop with but one halt.

You see how much may proceed from a little. I had merely intended to take a walk from Cheapside to Edmon-

ton and think of the merry ballad of John Gilpin on the way. But by so doing I hit upon a great fraud, and Cowper, most amiable of men that ever wore a nightcap, stands convicted of having for upwards of a century hoodwinked his fellows by inducing them by poetical cunning to believe in a ride that could never have been accomplished, in a route that could never be followed. Sad is it when faith in our household poets fails. One would begin to wonder if the *Royal George* really sank, were it not for the relics of it in Whitehall. William Tell was discredited long ago, Robin Hood is no more than a myth, Shakespeare is Bacon; alas, that John Gilpin should go too!



THE AVENUE, MIDDELHARNIS

AFTER THE PICTURE BY HOBBEMA IN THE NATIONAL GALLERY

CHAPTER XIII

THE TOWER AND THE AMPHIBIANS

Tower Hill and its victims — All Hallows, Barking — Ainsworth's romance — The Little Princes — St. John's Chapel — The Praise of Snuff — The Armouries — The Jewels — The Tower Residences — Jamrach's — Well-close Square — The Tower Bridge — Mr. Jacobs' Stories — Roofs and Chimneys — Pessimism in a Train — Reverence for the Law — The Ocean *in Urbe* — The most interesting terminus — Docks — Stepney and Limehouse — China in London — Canal Life — "Thank you, Driver" — An Intruder and the *mot juste*

ON the way to the Tower from Mark Lane station one crosses Tower Hill — perhaps, if the traffic permits, walking over the very spot on which stood the old scaffold. When I was last there a flock of pigeons was feeding exactly where I judged it to have been — that scaffold on which so many noble heads were struck from their shoulders, from Sir Thomas More and Surrey the poet to Strafford and Algernon Sidney, and a few ignoble ones, not the least of which was Simon Fraser, Lord Lovat's, the last man to be beheaded in England, the block on which he laid his wicked old neck being still to be seen, full of dents, in the Tower itself. Standing here it is extraordinary to think that only 159 years have passed since it was possible to behead a man publicly in broad day in the middle of a London street. Only five generations: one's great great great grandfather could have seen it.

Opposite Mark Lane Station, and at the corner of Great

Tower Street, which leads into Little Tower Street, and that in its turn into Eastcheap and the city proper, is All Hallows Church, whither many of the victims of the Tower Hill scaffold were carried for burial, among them the Earl of Surrey, Bishop Fisher and Archbishop Laud. All three were, however, afterwards removed elsewhere, Laud, for example, to St. John's College, Oxford. William Penn, who lived to speak contemptuously of churches as steeple-houses, was baptised here in 1644, and the bloody Judge Jeffreys, who harried Penn's sect so mercilessly, was married here to his first wife in the year following the Great Fire, which spared All Hallows by a kind of miracle — just thrusting out a tongue or two to lick up the porch and then drawing them back. The church, though it has a new spire, is, within, a fine example of medieval architecture, and its brasses are among the best that London contains. Among them is one of William Thynne and his wife, Thynne being worthy of all commendation as the man responsible for the first printed collection of Chaucer's works in 1532.

Another interesting Great Tower Street building, or rather re-building, is the Czar's Head, an inn on the same side as the church, which stands on the site of an older inn of that name to which Peter the Great, when learning at Deptford to build ships, resorted with his friends. Muscovy Court, out of Trinity Square, close by, derives its style from the same monarch. Little Tower Street has in a different way an equally unexpected association, for it was in a house there that James Thomson, the poet of *The Seasons*, wrote "Summer."

Harrison Ainsworth's romance *The Tower of London*, which I fear I should find a very tawdry work to-day, twenty and more years ago stirred me as few novels now

are able to, and fixed the Tower for all time as a home of dark mystery. Not even the present smugness of its officialdom, the notice boards, the soldiers in its barracks, the dryness of its moat or the formal sixpenny tickets of admission, can utterly obliterate the impression of Ainsworth's pages and Cruikshank's mezzotints. I still expect to see Gog and Magog eating a mammoth pasty; I still look for Xit the dwarf; and in a dark recess fancy I hear the shuddering sound of the headsman sharpening his axe. No need however for Ainsworth's fictions:—after reading the barest outline of English history, the Tower's stones run red enough. Anne Boleyn, Katherine Howard, Lady Jane Grey, Sir Thomas More, the Earl of Essex—these are a few who were beheaded in state within its walls; but what of the others who died secretly by force, like the little Princes and Sir Thomas Overbury, and those other thousands of prisoners unknown who ate their hearts out in the cells within these nine-feet walls?

The ordinary tickets admit only to the jewels and the armour, but a written application to the Governor procures an authorisation to see also the dungeons, in the company of a warder. The room in the Bloody Tower in which the little Princes were smothered is no longer shown, as it has become part of a private dwelling; but the window is pointed out, and with that husk you must be satisfied. Among the sights to which a special order entitles you is the cell in which Raleigh wrote the *History of the World*, and that narrow hollow in the wall of the White Tower, known as Little Ease, in which Guy Fawkes was immured while waiting for justice and death.

St. John's Chapel, in the White Tower, has a naked simplicity beyond anything I know, and a massiveness out of all proportion to its size, which inspires both confidence

and reverence. In its long life it has seen many strange and moving spectacles — from the all-night vigils of the Knights of the Bath, to Brackenbury's refusal at the altar side to murder the little Princes and the renunciation by Richard II of his crown in favour of Bolingbroke. I had the history of this chapel from a gentle old Irish beef-eater who sits in a chair and talks like a book. The names of monarchs and accompanying dates fell from his tongue in a gentle torrent until I stopped it with the question "Do *all* the warders in the Tower take snuff?" He had never been asked this before, and it knocked all the literature and history out of him and re-established his humanity. He became instantly an Irishman and a brother, confessed to his affection for a pinch (as I had detected), and we discussed the merits of the habit as freely as if the royal body of Elizabeth of York had never lain in state within a few yards of us, and no printed notice had warned me that the place being holy I must remove my hat.

In the Tower armouries every kind of decorative use has been made of old muskets, ramrods and pistols, resulting in ingenious mural patterns which must strike the schoolboy visitor as a most awful waste of desirable material. The armouries contain also some very real weapons indeed: to students of the machinery of death they are invaluable. The evolution of the sword and gun of all nations may be traced here, in glass cases which are so catholic as to contain not only the corkscrew dagger of Java but the harpoon gun of Nantucket. I think nothing impressed me more than a long and sinister catchpole — surely the most unpleasant weapon that ever assailed a man's comfort and dignity. The models of knights in armour cannot but add to the vividness of *Ivanhoe*. Among the more recent relics is the uniform which the Duke of Wellington wore as the



THE MONUMENT

Constable of the Tower, and the cloak, rolled up far too tightly and squeezed under glass, in which Wolfe died on the Heights of Abraham. It should be spread out. The drums from Blenheim touch the imagination too.

But the best things about the Tower are the Tower itself — its spaces and gateways, and old houses, and odd corners, and grave, hopping ravens — and St. John's Chapel. Interesting as the armour no doubt is, I could easily dispense with it, for there is something very irritating in being filed past policemen in the pursuit of the interesting; and one sees better crown jewels in any pantomime. Of medieval gravity one never tires; but medieval ostentation and gaudiness soon become unendurable. Yet I suppose more people go to the Tower to see the jewels than to see anything else. The odd fact that the infamous but courageous Colonel Blood, by his historic raid on the regalia in 1671, rose instantly from a furtive skulking subterraneous existence to a place at Court and £500 a year might have had the effect of multiplying such attempts; but it does not seem to have done so. No one tries to steal the crown today. And yet precedent is rarely so much in the thief's favour.

But the Tower as a whole — that is fine. There is a jumble of wooden walls and windows on one of the ramparts overlooking the river, where I would gladly live, no matter what the duties. What are the qualifications of the Governor of the Tower I know not, but I am an applicant for the post.

London's wild beasts, which now lend excitement to Regent's Park, used to be kept at the Tower, and the old guide books to it, a hundred and more years ago, are inclined to pay more attention to them than to history. A living lion was more to the authors of these volumes (as to

the sightseers also) than many dead kings. One such book which lies before me now, dated 1778, begins with this blameless proposition: "The Desire of seeing the Antiquities and Rarities of our Country is allowed by all to be a laudable Curiosity: to point them out therefore to the Inquisitive, and to direct their Attention to those Things that best deserve Notice, cannot be denied its degree of Merit." The guide then plunges bravely into history, but quickly emerges to describe, with a degree of spirit rare in the remainder of his work, the inhabitants of the menagerie. The chief animals at that time were the lions Dunco, Pompey, Dido, Cæsar, Miss Fanny, Hector, Nero, Cleony, and Helen, and the tigers Sir Richard, Jenny, Nancy, and Miss Groggery, who, "though a tigress, discovers no marks of ferocity." The old custom of calling the lions after the living monarchs of the day seems just then to have been in abeyance. In 1834 the menagerie was transferred to Regent's Park; but I think they might have left a cage or two for old sake's sake.

From the Tower, when I was there last, I walked to Jamrach's, down what used to be the Ratcliffe Highway, where De Quincey's favourite murderer Williams (who must, said George Dyer, have been rather an eccentric character) indulged in his famous holocaust a hundred years ago. It is now St. George's Street, and one reaches it by the wall of St. Katherine's Dock, through the scent of pepper and spice, and past the gloomy opening of Nightingale Lane, which has no reference to the beautiful singing bird of May, but takes its name from the Knighten Guild founded by King Edgar in the days when London was Danish.

Jamrach's is not what it was, for the wild beast trade, he tells me, no longer pays anyone but the Germans.

And so the tigers and leopards and panthers and lions and other beautiful dangers are no more to be seen crouching in the recesses of his cages; and instead I had to be satisfied with the company of parrots and macaws, the bul-bul of Persia and the mynah of India, lemurs and porcupines, cockatoos and blue Siberian kittens. These were in the shop, and in the stables were Japanese deer, and some white greyhounds from Afghanistan with eyes of milky blue, and a cage of wild turkeys. And, more interesting still, in the square at the back were six Iceland ponies, shaggy as a sheep dog and ingratiating as an Aberdeen terrier, and so small that they might be stabled under one's writing desk.

On this occasion I returned to Mark Lane station from Jamrach's by way of Wellclose Square, which saw the birth of Thomas Day, the author of *Sandford and Merton*, and was the site of the Magdalen Chapel of the famous Dr. Dodd, who found Beauties in Shakespeare and was the indefatigable friend of London's unfortunates until he took to luxury and excesses, became a forger, and died, as we saw in an earlier chapter, at Tyburn Tree. The square was once the centre of Denmark in London and is still associated with the sea, a school for seamen's children standing where the old Danish church stood, and seamen's institutes abounding hereabouts. Much of the square's ancient character has been preserved, and on one house are still to be seen some very attractive bas-reliefs of children pursuing the arts. The rebuilder is, however, rapidly drawing near, and already has cleared away a large tract of old houses by the Mint.

Another reminder of the sea is the Trinity House in Trinity Square, looking beyond the Tower to the river. From these offices the Brothers of the Trinity House control our lighthouses and lightships.

Into the Mint I have never penetrated; but the Tower Bridge I have climbed often, on clear days and misty. The noblest bridge I know (although its stone work is but veneer, and iron its heart), it is imposing however one sees it, broadside, or obliquely, or looking down from the Bridge Approach: with the roadway intact, or the bascules up to let a vessel through. It is the only gateway that London retains.

A few years ago the district over which the Tower Bridge stands as a kind of sentinel, and of which the docks are the mainstay, had no special significance. It was merely largely populated by those that follow the sea or the seaman. But since then has come Mr. Jacobs to make it real, and now no one who knows his engaging stories can ever walk about Wapping and Shadwell, Limehouse and Rotherhithe, without recalling the humour of this writer. It is a high compliment to a novelist and an indication of his triumph when we can say that he has created a new world, although from the circumstance that we say it only of the comic novelists, it has, I suppose, also a suggestion of limitation. A novelist whose characters for the most part behave like real people escapes the compliment: their world is also ours. We do not talk of Thackeray's world, of George Eliot's world. But we talk often of Dickens' world, which means that Dickens' love of eccentricity so impregnated his characters as to give them all a suspicion of family resemblance, branding them of his world rather more perhaps than of ours. Mr. Jacobs also thus stamps his seafaring men, so that we are coming to talk of the Jacobs' world too. Not that he — or not that Dickens — is false to life, but that both, liking people to be as they like them, tone up life a little to please their own sense of fun. It is one of the differences between the realist and the romancist that the

romancist wants to give himself pleasure as well as his reader. The realist is more concerned to do only his duty.

I wish that one might enter the Jacobs' world now and then instead of going to Switzerland or Scotland or the other dull countries where one makes formal holiday. But I fear it is not to be: I fear that the difference between fact and Mr. Jacobs' presentation of it will never be bridged. I have wandered much and listened much in Wapping and Rotherhithe, but have heard no admirable sarcasms, have met no skippers obviously disguised as women. I have listened to night-watchmen, but they have told me no tales like "The Money Box" or "Bill's Lapse." A lighterman at Rotherhithe (on the green balcony of the Angel) once told me a good story, but it is quite unfit for print and belongs peculiarly and painfully to our own world. I have heard the captains of barges and wherries exchanging repartees, but they were for the most part merely beastly. It is sad but true: the Jacobs' world is not accessible. Even if one followed Mr. Jacobs about, I doubt whether one would come to it: none the less may one live in hope as one wanders among the wharves and streets of this amphibious district.

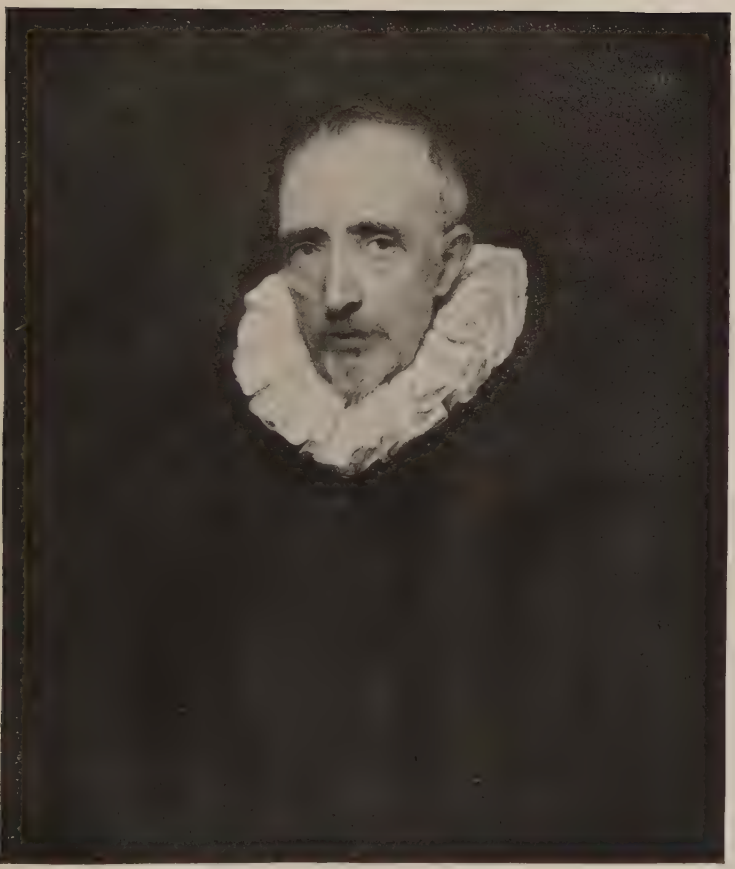
If one would explore it with any thoroughness one must walk from the Tower to the East India Docks: it is all there. But the quickest way to the East India Docks is to take the train from Fenchurch Street — that almost secret city terminus — to Blackwall.

If one were to ask a hundred people to name London's most interesting railway terminus, some would choose Charing Cross, some Waterloo, some Euston, some Paddington, and so forth. Not one would say Blackwall; and yet in its way Blackwall is more interesting than any of these others. It is at the end of one of the short grimy lines

from Fenchurch Street, through Stepney and Poplar: one of the lines which carry you on a raised rail level with the chimneys of small houses, all alike apparently for ever and ever, broken only by a factory chimney, or a three-master, or the glimmering spire of a white stone church. It is these miles of chimneys which keep me out of East London and South London, so oppressive are they, so desolating, so fatal to any idealistic view of humanity. Doomed to live in such squalor, such deserts of undersized similar houses, so that the identification of one's home becomes more wonderful than a bird's identification of its nest, how can we, one asks oneself, be anything but larger ants? What future is there for such groundlings? Is it not monstrous that our chances of eternity should be determined by conduct in an infinitesimal span of years under conditions such as these — with poverty and dirt and fog thrust on us from our birth — not our own poverty and dirt, but so powerful as to resist all efforts?

One has the same gloomy atheistic oppression as one comes into London on the South-Eastern, and in fact on every line where the carriage window is above these squalid London roofs and chimneys. One gets it again on the top of the Monument or St. Paul's or the tower of the new Roman Catholic cathedral at Westminster, looking down at the ceaseless activities of what surely must be insects — so busy about trifles or nothing at all, so near the ground, so near annihilation.

In a lighter mood I have sometimes as I looked out of the window of a railway carriage in the country allowed myself to dwell on the thought that there is not a square inch of this green England through which we are passing but possesses title-deeds reposing in some lawyer's safe. The same thought if indulged in one of these London



CORNELIUS VAN DER GEEST

AFTER THE PICTURE BY VAN DYCK IN THE NATIONAL GALLERY

trains, cannot but land one in a feeling for the law which, beginning with something like respect, must culminate in reverence. Everything belongs to someone — that is the truism which finally emerges. In the country, where there are unfenced heaths and hills and commons, one can forget it; but never in a city, where for every open space a code of regulations must be drawn up and displayed, and where every house in a small terrace may have a different owner. A further reflection is that although the lawyers may not inherit the earth (indeed they are expressly excluded by the beatitude), they will at any rate be indispensable at the negotiations.

To come into London between the roofs of Bermondsey on the South-Eastern, as I do very often, has, however, its compensations: for in the distance the shipping is always to be seen to carry one's thoughts afar. It was on one occasion, when this scene was new to me, that I found myself composing these stanzas: —

Between New Cross and London Bridge,
  I peered from a third-class "smoker,"
Over the grimy chimney pots
  Into the yellow ochre.

When lo! in a sudden lift of the fog
  Up rose a brave three-master
With brand-new canvas on every spar
  As fair as alabaster.

And, gazing on that gallant sight,
  In a moment's space, or sooner,
The smoke gave place to a southern breeze,
  The train to a bounding schooner.

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Again the vessel stood to sea,
  Majestic, snowy-breasted;
Again great ships rode nobly by,
  On purple waves foam-crested.

Again we passed mysterious coasts,
  Again soft nights enwound us;
Again the rising sun revealed
  Strange fishermen around us.

The spray was salt, the air was glad —
  When — bump — ! we reached the station:
But what did I care though fog was there,
  With *this* for compensation?

The interest of Blackwall station is its unique and romantic situation hard by the north bank of the Thames. You get into the train at Fenchurch Street, and in the company of shipping agents and mates, ships-chandlers and stewards, emigrants and engineers, you travel through the chimney pots and grime of London at its grimiest to this ugly station. And suddenly, having given up your ticket, you pass through a door and are in the open world and a fresh breeze, with the river at your very feet — a wherry or two beating up against the wind, a tug dragging out a schooner, and a great steamer from Hong Kong looking for her berth! It is the completest change, and on a fine day the most exhilarating.

And of all London termini Blackwall is most emphatically a terminus, for another yard and your train would be at the bottom of the East India Docks.

Docks are docks all the world over, and there is little to say of the East India Docks that could not be said of the docks at Barry in Wales, at Antwerp or Hamburg.

One is everywhere confronted by the same miracles of berthing and extrication. Perhaps at the East India Docks the miracles are more miraculous, for the leviathans of Donald Currie which lie here are so huge, the waterways and gates so narrow.

The last time I was there I returned on foot — down the East India Docks Road, through Poplar and Limehouse and Stepney: past hospitals and sailors' homes and Radical Clubs, and here and there a grave white church, and here and there, just off the main thoroughfare, a Board School with the side street full of children; and public houses uncountable, and foreign men on the pavement.

Just by Jack's Palace, which is the newest of the sailors' homes, at the corner of the West India Docks Road, I met a little band of five Chinese sailors in dirty blue linen. They were making, I suppose, for Limehouse Court, — an odd little street which is given up to lodging houses and grocers' shops kept by silent discreet Chinese who have married English women and settled down in London. They stand at their doors, these stolid Celestials, beneath their Chinese signs, for anyone to see, and are, I am told, among the best citizens of the East End and the kindest husbands.

A little west of Jack's Palace one ought to turn off to the south just to see the barges in Limehouse Basin, because it is here that they enter the river from Regent's Canal, that sluggish muddy waterway upon which one is always coming unexpectedly in the north-west district of London, and by which, if one were so minded, one could get right away into the heart of green England. Very stealthily it finds its slow and silent way about London, sometimes underground for quite long distances, as at

Islington, where the barges are pulled through by a steel hawser — almost scraping the sides and the roof as they go. By Regent's Park and at Paddington you may see boys angling from the tow-path; but no one ever saw them land a fish. I have long intended one day to strike a bargain with a bargee and become his shipmate for a while and see a little of England in this way; but somehow the opportunity never comes. Yet it should, for outside the city — at Hemel Hempsted or Berkhampsted for example — these craft are gay and smiling as any in Holland, and the banks are never dull.

At the hospital just opposite the entrance to the East India Docks and the Blackwall Tunnel — that curious subterranean and subaqueous roadway beneath the Thames, through which one may ride on the top of an omnibus, as one rides beneath Kingsway in a tram — notice boards are set up asking the drivers, for the sake of those that are ill within, to walk their horses past the building. That is a common enough request, but what gives it a peculiar interest here is that the carter having complied (or not) with the modest demand, is confronted at the end of the façade by another board saying "Thank you, driver."

In this and other of the poorer quarters of London, where everyone else is engaged in the struggle for life, one feels a little that it is an impertinence to be inquisitively wandering at all: that one has no right here unless one is part of the same machine. A little bold Jewess, aged nine or thereabouts, on her way home from school, seemed to share this view, for she looked at me with impudently scrutinising eyes (not ceasing the while to scratch her leg), and then shouted something which I failed to understand but which her companions enjoyed to the full. It was

an epithet of scorn, I am sure, and it seemed to challenge my right to be there, doing nothing but examining the fauna of the district for superior literary purposes. And I quite agreed with her. I left her still scratching her leg, the triumphant heroine of her circle, the satisfied author of the *mot juste.*

CHAPTER XIV

WHITECHAPEL AND THE BORO'

East of Bishopsgate — A new London and a new People — Love and Death — A Little Tragedy — The Female Lightning Extractor — A broad and vivid Road — The Trinity Almshouses — Epping Forest — Victoria Park — The Sand-bank and the People's Palace — The Ghetto — Norton Folgate — The Book Stalls of London — The Paris Quais — Over London Bridge — St. Saviour's — Two Epitaphs — Debtors' Prisons — Dickens and Chaucer — Guy's Hospital

LONDON east of Bishopsgate Street is another city altogether. It leads its own life, quite independent of the west, has its own social grades, its own pleasures, its own customs and code of morality, its own ambitions, its own theatres and music halls, its own smart set. The West End is in the habit of pitying the East: but the young bloods of the Mile End Road, which is at once the Bond Street, Strand and Piccadilly of this city, have as much reason to pity the West End. Life goes quite as merrily here: indeed, more so. There is a Continental bustle in this fine road — a finer, freer road than the rest of London can boast — and an infinitely truer feeling of friendliness. People know each other here. Friends on 'buses whistle to friends on the pavements. Talkative foreigners lend cheerfulness and picturesqueness. In the summer the fruit stalls are almost continuous — in early autumn purple with grapes. Nowhere else in London, in England is fruit so eaten. Sunday here is no day of

gloom: to a large part of the population it is shopping day, to a large part it is the only holiday.

There is no call to pity the Mile End Road or Whitechapel High Street. It is they rather than Bloomsbury and Bayswater that have solved the problem of how to live in London. If the art of life is, as I believe, largely the suppression of self-consciousness, these people are artists. They are as frank and unconcerned in their courtships as the West Enders are in their shopping. They will embrace on the top of a 'bus: anywhere. The last summer evening I was in the Mile End Road Cupid was terrifically busy.

But the last winter day I was there, I remember, it was the other end of life that was more noticeable; for funeral after funeral went by, all very ostentatious and all at the trot. Most of them were babies' funerals: one carriage only, with the poor little coffin under the box seat, and the driver and bearer in white hat bands; but one was imposing indeed, with a glass hearse under bushes of plumes — an ostrich-feather shrubbery, a splendid coffin snowed under flowers, half a dozen mourning coaches filled with men and women in the blackest of black, three four-wheelers, a hansom or so, two crowded wagonettes of the kind that licensed victuallers own and drive on Sundays, and a market cart packed with what seemed to be porters from Spitalfields market. I guessed the deceased to have been a fruit salesman. He was going home well, as those that die in the East End always do. No expense is spared then.

These many babies' funerals reminded me vividly of my first visit to the East End twelve or thirteen years ago. A girl of sixteen, a hand in an umbrella shop, unmarried, had become a mother, and her baby had died under suspicious circumstances. The case was in the papers, and a humanitarian friend of mine who was not well enough to go herself

asked me to try and see the girl or her people and find out if she needed any help. So I went. The address was a house in one of the squalid streets off the Commercial Road, and when I called the landlady said that the girl was at work again and would not be in for two hours. These hours I spent roaming the neighbourhood, for some time fascinated by the despatch, the cleverness, and the want of principle of a woman who sold patent medicines from a wagonette, and pulled out teeth for nothing by way of advertisement. Tooth after tooth she snatched from the bleeding jaws of the Commercial Road, beneath a naphtha lamp, talking the while with that high-pitched assurance which belongs to women who have a genius for business, and selling pain-killers and pills by the score between the extractions.

After a while I went back to the house and found the little wan mother, a wistful but wholly independent child, who was already perplexed enough by offers of help from kindly aliens in that other London (to say nothing of local missionaries), but had determined to resume her own life as if nothing had happened. And so I came away, but not before her landlord had pitched a tale of his own embarrassments that far transcended, to his mind, any difficulty that the girl might be in. And then I rode back to London on a 'bus, behind a second engineer who was taking a Limehouse barmaid to the Tivoli.

I believe that an observant loiterer in the Mile End Road would bring away a richer harvest than from any street in London. There seems to me always to be light there, and it is so wide and open that one's eyes are not worried and perplexed. Here also, and in its continuations, the Whitechapel High Street and Aldgate, one can reconstruct the past almost more easily than anywhere in London. There



THE VIRGIN AND CHILD, WITH ST. JEROME AND ST. DOMINIC

AFTER THE PICTURE BY FILIPPINO LIPPI IN THE NATIONAL GALLERY

are fewer changes; the width of the road has not been tampered with; some of the inns still retain their sign posts with a swinging sign; and many old houses remain — such as those in Butchers' Row in Aldgate, one of the most attractive collections of seventeenth-century façades that have been left. There is something very primitive and old-English in the shops too, not only of the butchers, but the ancient wine merchant's in the midst of them, whose old whisky is very warming to the dealers who assemble for the hay market in the middle of the road, just above here, three mornings a week.

But the architectural jewel of the Mile End Road is the Trinity Almshouses — a quiet square of snug little residences dating from the seventeenth century, for old men who have been mariners, and old women who are mariners' widows or daughters — sixty and more of them. In the midst is a grass plot, and at the end a chapel, and the Governor's house is by one gate and the Reading Room by the other. Home is the sailor, home from the sea, in this still backwater; and here he smokes and gossips till the end, within sound of the roar not of his ancient element but of humanity.

On a fine Sunday afternoon in summer the Mile End is crowded with vehicles — dog-carts, wagonettes, donkey-carts, every kind of democratic carriage, on its way to Wanstead and Epping and the River Lea, which is East London's don's Jordan. Epping Forest is out of the scheme of this book, or I could write of it with some fervour: of its fine seclusion and its open air, its thickets of hornbeam and groves of beech, its gorse and rivulets, its protected birds and deer, its determined roads and shy footpaths, and its occasional straggling Georgian towns with Victorian trimmings and far too many inns. The Forest, although motor cars rush through it, is properly the last stronghold of the

gig; the bicycle also, which is fast disappearing from patrician roads, may still be counted in its thousands here. Epping Forest knows nothing of progress: with perfect content and self-satisfaction it hugs the past and will hug it. It is still almost of the days of *Pickwick*, certainly not more recent than Leech.

The Sunday gigs and wagonettes, the donkey-carts and bicycles are, as I say, on their way to Epping and the open country: the trams and omnibuses are packed with people bound for one of the cemeteries or Victoria Park. This park, which lies between Hackney and Bethnal Green, is a park indeed: an open space that is really used and wanted, in a way that Hyde Park and Regent's Park and St. James's Park are not wanted. London in its western districts would still have air without them; but Hackney and Bethnal Green would have nothing were it not for Victoria Park. Battersea Park is made to do its work with some thoroughness; but it is a mere desolate unpeopled waste compared with Victoria Park. Whether the sand-bank which a few years ago was placed there for children to dig in, still remains, I know not; but when I was there last in warm weather, a few summers since, it was more populous than an ant hill and the most successful practical amelioration of a hard lot that had been known — in a district which had just seen the total failure of the People's Palace, that huge building in the Mile End Road that was to civilise and refine this wonderful East End nation, but which all too soon declined into a college and a desert. I sometimes doubt indeed if it is not the Mile End Road's destiny to civilise the rest of London. As I have said, these people lead far more genuine and sensible lives — and to do that, though it may not be all civilisation, is a long way towards it.

There is no difficulty in naming the prevailing type in Aldgate and Whitechapel High Street—olive skin, dark hair, hook nose. Here the Jews predominate. But if you would see them in their masses, unleavened by Christian, go to Middlesex Street (which used to be called Petticoat Lane) on Sunday, or Wentworth Street any day except Saturday. Wentworth Street is almost impassable for its stalls and chafferers. Save for its grime, it is impossible to believe it in England and within a few minutes of the Bank. The faces are foreign; the clothes are foreign, nearly all the women being wrapped in dark red shawls; the language is largely foreign, Yiddish being generally known here; and many of the articles on the stalls are foreign — from pickled fish and gherkins to scarfs of brilliant hue. Most of the Jews one sees hereabouts have some connection with the old clothes trade, the central exchange of which is just off Houndsditch — in Phil's Buildings — for the right to enter which you pay a penny, and once inside would gladly pay five shillings to be let out. Yet I suppose there are people who take season tickets.

Norton Folgate and Shoreditch are very different from Whitechapel High Street and the Mile End Road. They are quieter and much narrower. But they too have their old houses, and a chemist at a corner, I notice, still retains his old sign of a Golden Key. The London streets in the days of the hanging signs and gables must have been very picturesque. One does not see that we have gained anything to compensate for their loss — electric light and roll shutters do not count at all in the balance. Spital Square, off Norton Folgate, has been little impaired by the rebuilder, and some of its Georgian doors might open at any moment, one feels, to allow a silk merchant in knee breeches to step forth.

Shoreditch, like Aldgate High Street, has its stalls: many for whelks and oysters, which are steadily patronised, quite as a matter of course, all day long, and a few for old books. I bought for threepence when I was there last a very unprincipled satire in verse on poor Caroline of Brunswick, entitled *Messalina;* a work on Female Accomplishment (as much unlike the other as a book could be); and *Little Henry and His Bearer.* The Aldgate stalls are famous for the bargains one may find there; but one must look long under unfavourable conditions, and I have had no luck. The Farringdon Street stalls have served me better. London having no quays, as Paris has, it is here and to the Charing Cross Road that one must go for old books — to Aldgate and Farringdon Street in particular. I wonder that the West End has no street of stalls where one might turn over books and prints.

The Embankment, since it leads nowhere, is utterly neglected. The Londoner hates to be out of the swim, and therefore he would rather be jostled in Parliament Street and Whitehall, the Strand and Fleet Street, on his way to Blackfriars from Westminster, than walk direct but unaccompanied beside the river. Hence a mile of good broad coping on the Embankment wall is unused, where in Paris it would be bright with trays of books and prints and curiosities.

It is at Aldgate that on the east the city proper ends; but although the pump still stands, the gate is no more. Chaucer was once the tenant of the dwelling-house over the gate and, being a wine-merchant, of the cellars beneath it. Mention of the poet reminds me that we have not yet been to the Borough to see the Tabard; and this is a good opportunity — by 'bus to London Bridge. Not the London Bridge of the old prints, with its houses and shops

massed higher and thicker than any on Firenze's Ponte Vecchia, but the very utilitarian structure that ousted it eighty years ago.

London Bridge is the highest point to which great vessels can come: beyond are only tugs and such minor craft as can lower their funnels or masts and so creep beneath the arches. It has always typified London's business to me, because when I used as a child to come to town on my way to school, we came to London Bridge station, and the first great excitement was to cross the river here: the second, to lunch at Crosby Hall amid Tudor trappings. I still always loiter on London Bridge — looking over at the bustling stevedores and listening to the donkey engines and the cranes. From this point the Tower Bridge is the gate of London indeed, and the Tower indescribably solemn and medieval. St. Dunstan's-in-the-East hangs in the sky, a fairy spire, the only white and radiant thing amid the dun and grey.

St. Saviour's, which is now grandly known as Southwark Cathedral, is architecture of a different type, but it is beautiful too and sits as comfortably as any brooding hen. It is interesting both in its old parts and its new — very new indeed, but harmonious, and carefully reproducing what has been lost. In the vestry you may still see a Norman arch or two from the twelfth century. After a fire in the thirteenth century it was built again; and again and again since has it been enlarged and repaired. But it should now rest awhile, secure from masons. Be sure to ask the verger for the story of St. Mary Overy, who founded the priory of which this is the church: he tells it better than I could, and believes it too. He will also give you some interesting views on American glass as you stand before the window presented by Harvard University, and

will recite epitaphs to you, with much taste and feeling, including the lines on the World's Nonsuch, a beautiful and holy virgin of fourteen. Among these epitaphs is one upon Lockyer, the Cockle and Holloway, Beecham and Carter, of his time — the middle of the seventeenth century: —

> His Virtues and his Pith are so well known
> That Envy can't confine them under stone.
> But they'll survive his dust and not expire
> Till all things else at th' Universal Fire.

Yet where are the pills of Lockyer? Where are the galleons of Spain? Of another worthy parishioner, Garrard a grocer, it was written: —

> Weep not for him, since he is gone before
> To Heaven, where Grocers there are many more.

The church has old tombs and new windows, those in the new nave being very happily chosen and designed: one to Shakespeare, for his connection with Bankside and its Theatres; one to Massinger, who is buried here; one to John Fletcher, who is buried here too; one to Alleyn the actor; one to Gower, the Father of English Poetry, who is buried here and founded a chantry; one to Chaucer, who sent forth his pilgrims from the Tabard hard by; and one to Bunyan, erected with pennies subscribed by Southwark children. Although the church is so lenient to literature and the stage, no hero from the neighbouring bear-pit and bull-baiting arena is celebrated here.

The Tabard to-day is just a new inn on the site of the old and is not interesting; but there is an inn close to it, a few yards north, on the east side of the High Street, which preserves more of old coaching London than any that is now left, and is, I think, the only one remaining that keeps its galleries. I mean the George. When I came to



MERCURY INSTRUCTING CUPID

AFTER THE PICTURE BY CORREGGIO IN THE NATIONAL GALLERY

London the White Hart, a little to the north of this, still retained its yard and galleries — just as in the days when Samuel Weller was the boots here and first met Mr. Pickwick on his way to catch Jingle and Miss Wardle. So did the Bull and the Bell in Holborn. But these have all been renewed or removed, and the George is now alone. It stands in its yard, painted a cheerful colour, and the coffee room has a hot fire and high-backed bays to sit in, and the bar is a paradise of bottles. Surely the spirit of Dickens, who so loved the Borough, broods here. Surely the ghosts of Bob Sawyer and Ben Allen drop in now and then from Lant Street, and it is not too far for Mr. Micawber's genial spook to send for a bottle of something encouraging, from the King's Bench prison.

A few other old houses remain in the High Street — the Half Moon, with its flying bridge and old world stables, and No. 152, with a window standing out as in the old London prints; and one generally has the feeling that one is in a London of a many years' earlier date than that across London Bridge. Perhaps it is beer that keeps progress in check, for the hop merchants congregate here.

The church of St. George the Martyr — brick and stone (you see the spire in Hogarth's "Southwark Fair") — brings other memories of Dickens, for it was in the vestry here that little Dorrit slept, while the prisoners who died in the Marshalsea and King's Bench prison lie in its burial ground, now partly built over. The King's Bench prison, which existed so largely for debtors, had many illustrious visitors besides Mr. Micawber, sent thither not only by the eternal want of pence but also for some of the more positive offences. Among them was John Wilkes (for libel), Haydon, who painted his "Mock Election" here, William Combe, who wrote Syntax's tours here, and William Hone,

who edited his *Table Book* while in captivity. Hone was not in the prison but in its "rules" — which included several streets round about, but no public house and no theatre. Alleviations were however found. The Dorrit family were in the Marshalsea, which adjoined the King's Bench and had, like all the debtors' prisons, a skittle alley in which the gentlemen might, in Dickens' phrase, "bowl down their troubles." If you walk into Leyton's Buildings, which is very old and picturesque and has a noble timber yard at the end of it, you will be within this prison area. The Marshalsea not only harboured gentlemen who could not meet their bills, but had a compound for smugglers also. Nearly three hundred years ago some of the sweetest notes that ever struck a bliss upon the air of a prison cell rose from the Marshalsea, for here George Wither wrote his "Shepherd's Hunting."

One should certainly walk up St. Thomas's Street, if only to see the doorway of the house to the east of the Chapter House, and also to peep into Guy's, so venerable and staid and useful, and so populous with students and nurses, all wearing that air of resolute and assertive good health — more, of immortality — that always seems to belong to the officers of a hospital. And yet — and yet — John Keats was once a student at this very institution!

CHAPTER XV

HOLBORN AND BLOOMSBURY

The changing seasons — London at her best — Signs of Winter — True Londoners — Staple Inn — Ely Place — Gray's Inn — Lord Bacon — Dr. Johnson and the Bookseller — Bedford Row — The Foundling Hospital — Sunday Services — Culture and Advanced Theology — The Third Commandment — Queen Square — Edward Irving — Lord Thurlow — Red Lion Square and the Painters — St. George's and the Brewer — St. Giles' — Bloomsbury — Gower Street and the Wall Fruit — Egypt and Greece in London

I HAVE so often by a curious chance been in Holborn on those days in February and October when the certainty of spring and winter suddenly makes itself felt that I have come to associate the changing seasons inseparably with that road. One can be very conscious there of the approach of spring, very sure that the reign of winter is at hand. Why, I do not know, unless it is that being wide and on high ground Holborn gives the Londoner more than his share of sky, and where else should we look for portents?

I must confess to becoming very restless in London in the early spring. As one hurries over the asphalt the thought of primroses is intolerable. And London has a way of driving home one's losses by its many flower-sellers and by the crocuses and daffodils in the parks. But later — after the first rapture is over and the primroses no longer have to be sought but thrust themselves upon one

— I can remain in London with more composure and wait for the hot weather. London to my mind has four periods when she is more than tolerable, when she is the most desirable abode of all. These are May, when the freshness of the leaves and the clarity of the atmosphere unite to lend her an almost Continental brightness and charm; August at night; November at dusk when the presages of winter are in the air; and the few days before Christmas, when a good-natured bustle and an electric excitement and anticipation fill the streets. Were I my own master (or what is called one's own master) I would leave London immediately after Christmas and never set foot in her precincts again till the first match at Lord's; and soon after that I would be off again.

But November would see me back; for although London beneath a May sun is London at her loveliest, it is when the signs of winter begin to accumulate that to me she is most friendly, most homely. I admire her in May, but I am quite ready to leave her: in November I am glad that I shall not be going away for a long time. She assumes the winter garb so cheerfully and naturally. With the first fog of November she begins to be happy. "Now," one seems to hear her say, "now I am myself again. Summer was all very well, but clear air and warmth are not really in my line. I am a grey city and a dingy: smoke is the breath of my life: stir your fires and let us be comfortable and gloomy again." In the old days one of the surest signs of winter in London was straw in the 'buses; but there is not much of it now. The chestnut roasters, however, remain: still as certain harbingers of the winter as the swallows are of the summer. At the street corners you see their merry little furnaces glowing through the peep-holes, and if you will, and are not ashamed, you

may fill your pockets with two-pennyworth, and thus, at a ridiculously small expenditure, provide yourself with food and hand-warmers in one. A foreign chestnut-vender whom I saw the other day in the Strand kept supplies both of roast chestnuts and ice-cream on the same barrow, so that his patrons by purchasing of each could, alternately eating and licking, transport themselves to July or December, Spitzbergen or Sierra Leone. The hot-potato men are perennials, although perhaps they ply their business with less assiduity in summer than winter. I like best those over whose furnace is an arch of spikes, each one impaling a Magnum Bonum — like the heads that used to ornament Temple Bar. ("Behold the head of a tater," as a witty lady once remarked.) The sparrows now are thought tamer than in summer, and the pigeons would be so if that were possible. The chairs have all gone from the parks.

From the fact that I have already confessed to a desire to leave London for quite long periods, and from the confession which I now make that few pleasures in life seem to me to surpass the feeling of repose and anticipation and liberty that comes to one as one leans back in the carriage of an express train steaming steadily and noiselessly out of one of the great London stations, the deduction is easy that I am but an indifferent Londoner. With the best intentions in the world I cannot have deceived any reader into thinking me a good one. I am too critical: the true Londoner loves his city not only passionately but indiscriminately. She is all in all to him. He loves every aspect of her, every particular, because all go to the completion of his ideal, his mistress. None the less (although I suggest that my travels would assist in disqualifying me), his love does not prevent him from leaving her: you meet

true Londoners all over the world; indeed, it is abroad that you find them most articulate, for the London tendency to ridicule emotion and abbreviate displays of sentiment (except on the melodramatic stage) prevents them at home from showing their love as freely as they can do abroad. At home they are sardonic, suspicious, chary of praise; but in the lonely places of the earth and in times of depression all the Londoner comes out.

Everyone knows how Private Ortheris, in Mr. Kipling's story, went mad in the heat of India and babbled not of green fields but of the Strand and the Adelphi arches, orange peel, wet pavements and flaring gas jets; and on the day on which I am writing these words I find in a paper a quotation from an article in a medical magazine, by the lady superintendent of a country sanitorium for consumptives, who says that once having a patient who was unmistakably dying, and having written to his friends to receive him again, they replied that his home off the Euston Road was so wretched that they hoped she could keep him; which she would have done but for the man himself, who implored her to send him back "where he could hear once more the 'buses in the Euston Road." There, in these two men, one in India and one dying in East Anglia, speaks the true Londoner. No transitory visitor to the city can ever acquire this love; I doubt if anyone can who did not spend his childhood in it.

The Londoner speaking here is the real thing: the homesickness which he feels is not to be counterfeited. It is not the saddest part of the latter days of Charles Lamb that he was doomed to Enfield and Edmonton, and that when he did get to London now and then it was peopled by ghosts and knew him not. No wonder he shed tears to find that St. Dunstan's iron figures—the wonders of his infancy, as



STAPLE INN

those in Cheapside have been the wonders of ours — had vanished. This is the real love of London, which I for one cannot pretend to, much as I should value it. London is neither my mother nor my step-mother; but I love her always a little, and now and then well on the other side of idolatry.

There is that other type of Londoner, too, that is in love not with its sights and savours but with its intellectual variety — a type fixed for me in an elderly man of letters of considerable renown, the friend of some of the rarest spirits in modern life, whom when, almost a boy, I was for the first time in his company, I heard say that he "dared not leave London for fear some new and interesting figure should arrive during his absence and be missed by him." That speaker was a true Londoner too.

Meanwhile what of Holborn and Bloomsbury?

Holborn is chiefly remarkable for that row of old houses opposite Gray's Inn Road which give so false an impression of this city to visitors who enter it at Euston or St. Pancras or King's Cross, and speeding down the Gray's Inn Road in their hansoms, see this wonderful piece of medievalism before them. "Is London like that?" they say; and prepare for pleasures that will not be fulfilled. The houses, which are piously preserved by the Prudential directors, form the north side of Staple Inn, one of the quietest and most charming of the small Inns of Court, with trees full of sparrows, whose clamour towards evening is incredibly assertive, and a beautiful little hall. It is all very old and rather crazy, and it would be well for us now to see it as often as we can, lest its knell suddenly sound and we have not the chance again. Something of the same effect of quietude is to be obtained in the precincts of the Mercers' School, a little to the east, especially in the outer court;

but this is a very minute backwater. For quietude with space you must seek Gray's Inn.

But before exploring Gray's Inn one might look into Ely Place on the other side of the road, at the beginning of Charterhouse Street, for it is old and historic, marking the site of the palace where John of Gaunt died. Sir Christopher Hatton, who danced before Elizabeth, secured a part of the building and made himself a spacious home there, a tenancy still commemorated by Hatton Garden, close by, where the diamond merchants have their mart. Ely Place, as it now stands, was built at the end of the eighteenth century, but the chapel of the ancient palace still remains, and has passed to the Roman Catholics, who have made it beautiful. The crypt is one of the quietest sanctuaries in London.

Gray's Inn has let the rebuilder in here and there, but he has been well watched, and in a very little time, under London's grimy influence, his work will fall into line with the Inn's prevailing style. The large Square is still the serene abode of antiquity — not too remote, but sufficiently so for peace. The most illustrious of Gray's Inn's members is Francis Bacon, Lord Verulam, who acted as its treasurer and kept his rooms here to the end. He identified himself with all the activities of the Inn, grave and gay, and helped in laying out its gardens. To meditate upon the great Chancellor most fittingly one must saunter at evening in Gray's Inn Walk, beneath the trees, the descendants of those which he planted with his own hand. It was here perhaps that his own sage and melodious thoughts on gardens came to him.

Among Gray's Inn's other illustrious residents for long or short periods were Ritson the antiquary and vegetarian, Oliver Goldsmith, Southey and Macaulay. It was behind

Gray's Inn that Mr. Justice Shallow fought with Sampson Stockfish, a fruiterer. Tonson, the publisher and bookseller, had his shop by Gray's Inn Gate in Holborn before he moved to the Shakespeare's Head in the Strand. Osborne, the bookseller of "impassive dulness," and "entirely destitute of shame," whom Dr. Johnson knocked down, had his shop here too. The story goes that the Great Lexicographer there floored him with a folio and set his learned foot upon his neck; but this, it is sad to relate, was not so. "Sir, he was impertinent to me and I beat him. But it was not in his shop: it was in my own chambers" — that is the true version. Booksellers (perhaps from fear) have rather abandoned this neighbourhood now, although there are a few in the little alleys about — in Red Lion Passage for example, and in both Turnstile Streets; but curiosity-shops abound.

Through Gray's Inn one may gain Bedford Row, which might almost be a part of the inn itself, so quiet and Georgian is it — the best-preserved and widest Georgian street in London, occupied in its earliest days by aristocrats and plutocrats, but now wholly in the hands of the Law. I like to think it was at No. 14 that Abernethy fired prescriptions and advice at his outraged patients. Bedford Row is utterly un-modern.

I noted as I passed through it one day recently a carriage and pair of old-fashioned build drawn up before one of the houses. It had the amplitude of the last century's youth. There was no rumble, but had there been one it would have seemed no excrescence. A coronet was on the panel, and the coachman was aged and comfortable and serene. The footman by the door had also the air of security that comes of service in a quiet and ancient family. Suddenly from the sombre Georgian house

emerged a swift young clerk with a sign to the waiting servants. The coachman's back lost its curve, the venerable horses lifted their ears, the footman stood erect and vigilant, as a little, lively, be-ribboned lady and her portly and dignified man of law appeared in the passage and slowly descended the steps. The little lady's hand was on his arm; she was feeble and very old, and his handsome white head was bent towards her to catch her final instructions. They crossed the pavement with tiny steps, and with old-world gravity and courtesy he relinquished her to the footman and bowed his farewells. She nodded to him as the carriage rolled steadily away, and I had a full glimpse of her face, hitherto hidden by her bonnet. It wore an expression kindly and relieved, and I felt assured that her mission had been rather to add an unexpected and benevolent codicil than to disinherit anyone. It all seemed so rightly a part of the life of Bedford Row.

By Great James Street, which is a northern continuation of Bedford Row on the other side of Theobald's (pronounced Tibbles') Road, and, like it, Georgian and wainscotted with oak and out-moded, one comes to Mecklenburgh Square and the Foundling Hospital (known locally as the "Fondling"): the heart of old Bloomsbury. Visitors are shown over the Hospital on certain days in the week; and I think I advise the visit to be made. It is a pleasant institution to see, and on the walls of the long low rooms are some interesting pictures — its founder, the good Captain Coram, painted by Hogarth, who was closely associated with the charity; scriptural texts illustrating our duties to the fatherless translated into paint by the same master and by such contemporaries as Highmore, Wills and Hayman; portraits of governors by the score; and a portion of a cartoon by Raphael. Here also may

be seen medals belonging to foundlings who have become warriors; cases of odd trinkets attached to foundlings in the old days when these poor little forlorn love-children were deposited in the permanent cradle at the gates; signatures of kings; old MSS.; and the keyboard and tuning fork that were used by the great George Frederick Handel when he was organist here. All these and other curiosities will be shown you by a sturdy boy, who will then open the door suddenly upon foundlings in class, and foundlings at play, the infant school being packed with stolid and solid children all exactly alike in their brown clothes and white pinafores and all profoundly grateful for a visitor to stare at.

The boys for the most part become soldiers and sailors: the girls go into service. In the early days the boys were named after heroes of the battle-field and the ocean, and the girls after whom I know not, but St. Xita is their patroness, one and all. To-day there may be a new system of nomenclature; but if not, one may expect to find Drakes and Rodneys, Nelsons and Collingwoods, Beresfords and Fishers, Wellingtons and Havelocks, Gordons and Burnabys, Roberts and Kitcheners. The first boy baby admitted was very prettily named Thomas Coram, and the first girl baby Eunice Coram, after their kindly stepfather and stepmother.

London, as I have hinted, does little enough for its guests on Sundays; but morning service at the Foundling Hospital must certainly be grouped among its entertainments. We are not as a people given to mingle much taste or charm with our charity: we never quite forgive the pauper or the unfortunate; but there is charm here. Anyone that wishes may attend, provided that he adds a silver coin to the offertory (here emerging the shining usefulness of the threepenny bit!). It has for some years been the custom to

appoint as chaplain a preacher of some eloquence or intellectual bravery, or both. I remember that the first sermon I listened to in this square and formal Georgian temple touched upon the difference that must always exist in the experience of eye-witnesses, an illustration being drawn by the divine from "the two bulky volumes on Persia by Mr. George Curzon, which doubtless many of you have read." I certainly had not read them; and although the gods stand up for bastards I doubt if any of his congregation proper had; but there they sat, row upon row, in their gallery, all spick and span with their white caps and collars and pink cheeks, and gave as little indication as might be that they were intensely uninterested, if not positively chilled. Perhaps they have their own human sermons too, when the silver-edged stranger is not admitted. I hope so.

If the sermon is ever too advanced for the visitor (and I seem to remember that now and again it was so in the days of the gifted Momerie) he will always find the children worth study. "Boy," said the terrible James Boyer of Christ's Hospital to the youthful Samuel Taylor Coleridge, "boy, the school is your father: boy, the school is your mother . . . let's have no more crying." It was not quite true of Coleridge, who had a real enough mother in Devonshire: but it is literally true of the children here. Yet when the Communion comes round their response to the fifth commandment is as hearty as to any other, and as free from apparent irony.

Before the Foundling Hospital was built, in 1739, there were fields here, and in 1719 a very early cricket match was played in them between the Men of Kent and the Men of London for £60. I know not which won. At No. 77 Guilford Street, in 1803, lived Sydney Smith. Although in the centre of Queen Square, which leads out of Guilford



VIRGIN AND CHILD

AFTER THE PICTURE BY BOTTICELLI IN THE NATIONAL GALLERY

Street to the west, stands a statue of Queen Charlotte, the enclosure was named after Queen Anne, in whose reign it was built. Many traces of its early state remain. Hospitals now throng here, where once were gentlemen and scholars: among them Antony Askew, physician and Grecian and the friend of all learning; and Dr. Campbell of the *Biographia Britannica*, whose house Dr. Johnson frequented until the shivering fear came upon him that the Scotsmen who flocked there might accuse him of borrowing his good things from their countrymen. Another friend of Johnson, Dr. Charles Burney, also lived in Queen Square. In a house on the west side, an architect once told me, is still to be seen a perfect example of an ancient English well. Having no opening into Guilford Street except for foot passengers, Queen Square remains one of the quietest spots in London, and scholars might well live there now. Perhaps they do. Such houses would naturally harbour book-worms and scholiasts.

Few streets have changed less, except in residents, than Gloucester Street, running between Queen Square and Theobald's Road, which dates from Anne or George I and has all its original architecture, with two centuries of dirt added. It is long and narrow and gives in perfection the old Bloomsbury vista. At No. 19 lodged Edward Irving, the preacher, when he first came to London, little dreaming perhaps that his followers some forty years later were to build the cathedral of the Catholic and Apostolic, or Irvingite, body in Gordon Square. Great Ormond Street, leading out of Queen Square on the east, has much history too, especially at No. 45, lately the Working Men's College, for it was here that Lord Chancellor Thurlow was living when in 1784 the Great Seal was stolen. Here also Thurlow entertained the poet Crabbe and thought him "as like

Parson Adams as twelve to a dozen." Macaulay lived at No. 50 from 1823 to 1831, but the house is now no more: part of the Children's Hospital stands on its site. No. 44 Great Ormond Street is one of the most attractive of the old Georgian houses, with some fine iron work to increase its charm.

From Great Ormond Street we gain Lamb's Conduit Street, which, crossing Theobald's Road, becomes Red Lion Street, an old and narrow street between Bedford Row and Red Lion Square. No. 9 Red Lion Street is famous as being the house in which the firm of William Morris first began its existence and entered upon its career of revolutionising taste in furniture and driving Victorian stuffiness from our houses. At No. 15 lived for a while Burne-Jones and Rossetti. Haydon, another painter of individualism and purpose, lived on the west side of the square; and Henry Meyer, at his studio at No. 3, in the spring of 1826, gave sittings to a little dark gentleman in knee-breeches with a fine Titian head "full of dumb eloquence," who had just left the India House on a pension — Charles Lamb by name. The picture may be seen at the India Office in Whitehall to-day, commemorating if not the most assiduous of its clerks the one who covered its official writing paper with the best and tenderest literature.

Between Red Lion Square and the British Museum, whither we are now bound, one object of interest alone is to be seen — St. George's Church in Hart Street, famous for its pyramidal spire, culminating in a statue not of George the Saint but of George the First; placed there, to London's intense amusement, by Hucks the brewer. Hogarth, who liked to set a London spire in the background of his satirical scenes, has this in his terrible "Gin Lane," just as St. Giles, close by, is in his "Beer Street."

Munden the actor, whose grimaces and drolleries Lamb has made immortal, was buried in the churchyard of St. George's, now transformed into a recreation ground. Above the old player with the bouquet of faces Bloomsbury children now frolic.

St. Giles'-in-the-Fields is so near that we ought perhaps to glance at it before exploring the Museum and the rest of Bloomsbury. It is still in the midst of not too savoury a neighbourhood, although no longer the obvious antipodes to St. James's that it used to be in literature and speech. When we want contrasts now we speak of the West End and the East End. St. Giles' is a dead letter. The present church is not so old as one might think: much later than Wren: and it is interesting rather for its forerunner's name than for itself, and also for being the last resting place of such men as George Chapman, who translated Homer into swinging Elizabethan English, Inigo Jones, and the sweetest of garden poets, Andrew Marvell.

Bloomsbury, which is the adopted home of the economical American visitor and the Hindoo student; Bloomsbury, whose myriad boarding-houses give the lie to the poet's statement that East and West can never meet; is bounded on the south by Oxford Street and High Holborn; on the north by the Euston Road; on the east by Southampton Row; and on the west by Tottenham Court Road. It has few shops and many residents, and is a stronghold of middle class respectability and learning. The British Museum is its heart: its lungs are Bedford Square and Russell Square, Gordon Square and Woburn Square: and its aorta is Gower Street, which goes on for ever. Lawyers and law students live here, to be near the Inns of Court; bookish men live here, to be near the Museum; and Jews live here, to be near the University

College School, which is non-sectarian. Bloomsbury is discreet and handy: it is near everything, and although not fashionable, anyone, I understand, may live there without losing caste. It belongs to the Ducal House of Bedford, which has given its names very freely to its streets and squares.

To my mind Gower Street is not quite old enough to be interesting, but it has had some very human inhabitants of eminence, and has one or two still. Millais lived with his father at No. 87; the great Peter de Wint, who painted English cornfields as no one ever did before or since, died at No. 40. In its early days Gower Street was famous for — what? Its rural character and its fruit. Mrs. Siddons lived in a house there, the back of which was "most effectually in the country and delightfully pleasant" while Lord Eldon's peaches (at the back of No. 42), Col. Sutherland's grapes (at No. 33), and William Bentham's nectarines were the talk of all who ate them.

Everyone who cares for the beautiful sensitive art of John Flaxman, the friend of Blake, should penetrate to the dome of University College, where is a fine collection of his drawings and reliefs. The College also possesses the embalmed body of Jeremy Bentham. Other objects of interest in this neighbourhood are the allegorical frescoes at University Hall in Gordon Square, filled with portraits of great Englishmen; the memorial to Christina Rossetti in Christ Church, Woburn Square; and two unexpected and imposing pieces of architecture — St. Pancras Church in the Euston Road, and Euston station. Euston station, seen at night or through a mist, is one of the most impressive sights in London. As Aubrey Beardsley, the marvellous youth who perished in his decadence, used to say, Euston station made it unnecessary to visit Egypt. I would not



THE VIRGIN ADORING THE INFANT CHRIST (WITH THE ARCHANGEL MICHAEL, AND THE ARCHANGEL RAPHAEL WITH TOBIAS)

AFTER AN ALTAR PIECE BY PERUGINO IN THE NATIONAL GALLERY

add that St. Pancras Church makes it unnecessary to visit Greece; but it is a very interesting summary of Greek traditions, its main building being an adaptation of the Ionic temple of the Erectheion on the Acropolis at Athens, its tower deriving from the Horologium or Temple of the Winds, and its dependencies, with their noble caryatides, being adaptations of the south portico of the Pandroseion, also at Athens.

Bloomsbury, as I have said, gives harbourage to all colours, and the Baboo law student is one of the commonest incidents of its streets. But the oddest alien I ever saw there was in the area of the house of a medical friend in Woburn Square. While waiting on the steps for the bell to be answered I heard the sound of brushing, and looking down, I saw a small negro boy busily polishing a boot. He glanced up with a friendly smile, his eyes and teeth gleaming, and I noticed that on his right wrist was a broad ivory ring. "So you're no longer an Abolitionist!" I said to the doctor when I at last gained his room. "No," he answered: "at least, my sister isn't. That's a boy my brother-in-law has just brought from West Africa. He didn't exactly want him, but the boy was wild to see England, and at the last minute jumped on board." "And what does the ring on his arm mean?" I asked. "O, he's a king's son out there. That's a symbol of authority. At home he has the power of life and death over fifty slaves."

When I came away the boy was still busily at work, but he had changed the boots for knife-cleaning. He cast another merry smile up to me as I descended the steps — the king's son with the power of life and death over fifty slaves.

CHAPTER XVI

THE BRITISH MUSEUM AND SOHO

The Bloomsbury History of the World — Great statuary — Julius Cæsar and Demeter — The Elgin Marbles — Terra-cotta and bronze — MSS. — London's foreign quarter — Soho Square and Golden Square — Soho — Cheap restaurants — The old artists' quarter — Wardour Street and Berners Street — The great Hoax — Madame Tussaud's — Clothes without Illusion — The Chamber of Horrors — Thoughts on the Killing of Men — The Vivifying of *Little Arthur* — Waxworks at Night — An Experience in the Edgware Road

THE British Museum is the history of the world: in its Bloomsbury galleries the history of civilisation, in its Cromwell Road galleries the history of nature; in Bloomsbury man, in Cromwell Road God. The lesson of the British Museum is the transitoriness of man and the littleness of his greatest deeds. That is the burden of its every Bloomsbury room. The ghosts of dead peoples, once dominant, inhabit it; the dust of empires fills its air. One may turn in from Oxford Street and in half an hour pass all the nations of the earth, commanding and servile, cultured and uncouth, under review. The finest achievements of Greek sculpture are here, and here are the painted canoes of the South Sea Islander; the Egyptian Book of the Dead is here, and here, in the Reading Room, is a copy of the work you are now judiciously skipping; the obelisk of Shalmaneser is here, and here are cinematoscope records of London street scenes.

It is too much for one mind to grasp. Nor do I try. The Roman Emperors, the Græco-Roman sculptures, the bronzes, the terra-cottas, the Etruscan vases, the gems, the ceramics and glass, the prints, the manuscripts, the Egyptian rooms — these, with the Reading Room, are my British Museum. Among the other things I am too conscious of the typical museum depression: it is all so bleak and instructive.

In vain for me have the archipelagos of the Pacific been ransacked for weapons and canoes; in vain for me have spades been busy in Assyria and Babylonia. Primitive man does not interest me, and Nineveh was not human enough. Not till the Egyptians baked pottery divinely blue and invented most of civilisation's endearing ways did the world begin for me; but I could spare everything that Egypt has yielded us rather than the Demeter of Cnidos, the serenest thing in England, or the head of Julius Cæsar. For although at the Museum the interesting predominates over the beautiful, the beautiful is here too; more than the beautiful, the sublime. For here are the Elgin Marbles: the Three Fates from the Parthenon, and its bas-reliefs, which are among the greatest works of art that man has achieved. We may not have the Winged Victory of Samothrace, or the Venus of Milo, the Laocoön or the Dying Gladiator; but we have these, and we have the Demeter and the Julius Cæsar and the bronze head of Hypnos.

One reaches the sculpture galleries by way of the Roman Gallery, where the Emperors are, culminating in the Julius Cæsar, surely the most fascinating male head ever chiselled from marble. I pause always before the brutal pugilistic features of Trajanus, and the Caracalla, so rustic and determined, and the mischievous charm of Julia Paula. In

the Second Græco-Roman room is a superb Discobolos, and here also is a little beautiful torso of Aphrodite loosening her sandal — that action in which the great masters so often placed her, that the exquisite contour of the curved back might be theirs. My favourites in the Third Græco-Roman room are the head of Aphrodite from the Townley Collection — No. 1596; the boy extracting a thorn from his foot, No. 1755; the head of Apollo Musegates, No. 1548, the beauty of which triumphs over the lack of a nose in the amazing way that the perfect beauty of a statue will — so much so indeed that one very soon comes not to miss the broken portions at all. It is almost as if one acquires a second vision that subconsciously supplies the missing parts and enables one to see it whole; or rather prevents one from noticing that it is incomplete. I love also the head in Asiatic attire — No. 1769 — on the same side, and the terminal figure opposite — No. 1742 — on which the winds and the rains have laid their softening hand.

But all these give way to the Ceres, or Demeter, in the Greek ante-room. This is to me the most beautiful piece of sculpture in the British Museum. It came from the sanctuary of Demeter at Cnidos — a temple to worship in indeed! I know of no Madonna in the painting of any old master more material and serene and wise and holy than this marble goddess from the fourth century B.C., a photograph of which will be found on the opposite page.

In a case on the right of the Ephesus Room, as you enter from this ante-room, are two gems — another little Aphrodite, No. 1417, with a back of liquid softness; and a draped figure of the same goddess, from her temple at Cyrene — the lower half only — the folds of the dress being exquisite beyond words.

And so we enter the room which brings more people to



THE DEMETER OF CNIDOS

AFTER THE STATUE IN THE BRITISH MUSEUM

Bloomsbury than any other treasure here — the room of the Elgin Marbles, which certain sentimentalists would restore to Greece but which I for one think better here. The group of Fates is the most wonderful; and it is difficult to imagine how much more impressive they would be if they were unmutilated. As it is, they have more dignity and more beauty than the ordinary observer can witness unmoved. Broken fragments as they are, they are the last word in plastic art; and one wonders how the Athenians dared look at their temple in its perfection. On a lower plane, but great and satisfying and beautiful beyond description, are some of the reliefs from the frieze — the perfection of the treatment of the horse in decorative art. Such horses, such horsemen: life and loveliness in every line.

From marble it is interesting to pass to terra-cotta: from the sublime to the charming: from the tremendous to the pretty. It is, however, charm and prettiness of a very high order, some of the little figures from Tanagra and Eretria being exquisite. Note in particular these numbers for their grace and their quaintness: C. 299, an aged nurse and child; C. 278, mother and child; C. 245, a girl with a fan; C. 214, the writing lesson; C. 250, a woman draped and hooded (this is reproduced in the admirable official catalogue); C. 308, a little girl, and C. 196, a Cupid. The domesticity of so many of these figures — the women with fans, the girls playing astrageli, and so forth — always brings to my mind that idyll of Theocritus in which the two frivolous women chat together.

After the terra-cottas we come to the bronzes, chief among which is the wonderful Hypnos from Perugia. Of the treasures of these rooms I can say nothing: they are endless. And so we pass on to the four Vase rooms, and

then come to ancient Egypt, where everything that we do now and deem novel and exciting (short of electricity and motors) seems to have been old game.

Parallel with the Egyptian rooms are a series of smaller rooms illustrating the history of religion, leading to the Ethnographical Gallery, which leads in its turn to netsukés (the variety and perfection of which are alike bewildering), ceramics and prints.

The collection of English and foreign pottery and porcelain and glass is fascinatingly displayed, and one may lose oneself completely here, whether it is before Lowestoft and Chelsea or old Greek prismatic glass, Delft or Nankin, Sèvres or Wedgewood, Persian tiles or Rhodian plates.

One reaches the ground floor again by way of the Medieval Room, which contains many odd treasures but is perhaps rather too much like an old curiosity-shop, such as Balzac describes in the *Peau de Chagrin* or Stevenson in *Markheim*. In the room at the end of the porcelain gallery an exhibition of drawings and engravings from the print department is usually on view. At the moment at which I write it is given up to mezzotints.

But before descending again, one ought to see the ornaments and gems — marvellous intaglios and cameos beyond price from Egypt and Greece and Rome; precious stones of every variety, and wonderful imitations of precious stones of every variety, which, false as they may be, are still quite precious enough for me; gold work of all periods; the famous Portland Vase of blue glass; and frescoes from Pompeii.

One of the most interesting things in the Hall of Inscriptions on the way to the Reading Room is the slab of marble which used to be hung outside a Roman circus, with the words on it, in Latin: "Circus Full. Great Shouting.

Doors Closed." Few things bring the modernity of Romans, or the ancientry of ourselves, so vividly before one.

A continuous exhibition of illuminated books, famous MSS., letters and early printed books is held in the cases in the library galleries to the right of the Entrance Hall. Here one may see Books of Hours, Bibles and missals, with quaint and patient drawings by Flemish and Italian artists; the handwriting of kings and scholars, Boer generals and divines; manuscripts of poems by Keats and Pope, illustrating the laborious stages by which perfection is reached; an early story by Charlotte Brontë in a hand too small to be legible to the naked eye; a commonplace book of Milton's; and books from the presses of Caxton and Gutenberg. Here also are manuscript pages of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* from old Greek libraries, with comments by old Greek scholars.

It is not until one has wandered in the British Museum for some weeks that one begins to realise how inexhaustible it is. To know it is impossible; but the task of extracting its secrets is made less difficult by acquiring and studying its excellent catalogues, which are on sale in the Entrance Hall. Apart from their immediate use they are very good reading.

The quickest way to Soho from the Museum is down Shaftesbury Avenue; or one may fight one's way through the blended odours of beer, pickles and jam, all in the making, to Soho Square, and recover one's self-respect in the Roman Catholic church of St. Patrick, which is there. So Italian is its interior that you cannot believe you are in London at all.

Soho proper lies between Oxford Street, Charing Cross Road, Leicester Square and Warwick Street; but the

corresponding parellelogram north of Oxford Street, bounded by the Tottenham Court Road, the Euston Road and Great Portland Street, is now almost equally foreign, the pavements of Great Portland Street in particular being very cosmopolitan. I have been told that in the Percy Street and Cleveland Street neighbourhood many of the great anarchist plots have been hatched; certain it is that London has offered as many advantages to the political desperado as any city, except perhaps Geneva.

The foreign residents of Soho proper are almost exclusively French; north of Oxford Street we find Italians too and Germans. Poorer Italians still, organ grinders from Chiaveri, monkey boys from further south and ice cream men from Naples live on Saffron Hill, by Leather Lane; Swiss mechanics live in Clerkenwell; poor Jews live in Whitechapel, as we have seen; middle-class Jews in Maida Vale; rich Jews in Bayswater. American settlers are fond of Hampstead; American visitors like the Embankment hotels or Bloomsbury. Although there are many exceptions, one can generalise quite safely on London's settlements, not only of foreigners, but of professional and artistic groups. Thus the artists live in Chelsea, Kensington, St. John's Wood and Hampstead; the chief doctors are in and about Harley Street; Music Hall performers like to cross the river on their way home; musicians congregate about Baker Street; Kensington has many literary people.

In addition to Leicester Square, which is however far less French than it used to be, Soho has two squares — Soho Square and Golden Square. It is Soho Square which gives the name to the district — "So ho!" an old cry of the harriers, but why thus applied no one knows. The story that it was previously called Monmouth Square and King's Square, and changed to Soho Square after Sedgemoor,

where "So ho!" was Monmouth's battle-call, is, I believe, disproved; the reverse being the fact — the battle-cry coming from the neighbourhood. The Duke of Monmouth was the first resident here — in 1681 — his house being on the south side, between Frith Street and Greek Street. Other residents in the Square were Sir Cloudesley Shovel, the admiral, "Vathek" Beckford and Sir Joseph Banks, the botanist. A statue of Charles the Second used to stand in the centre, facing the house of his unlucky natural son. George the Second still stands in Golden Square, half a mile to the west, which a few years ago it would have been imperative to visit, for it had, on the south side, one of the comeliest of London's Georgian houses; but that too has now gone and the square is uninteresting. In the midst is a fantastic statue of George II. Miss Killmansegg ought to have lived here, but did not. Golden Square was, however, the abode of Ralph Nickleby, and in real life, among others, of Angelica Kauffmann, the artist (Mrs. Ritchie's charming "Miss Angel"), and Cardinal Wiseman, who may or may not have been Bishop Blougram who apologised.

Soho has never been the same since Shaftesbury Avenue and the Charing Cross Road ploughed through her midst and to eat in her restaurants became a fashion. Before those days she was a city apart, a Continental city within a London city, living her own life; but now she is open to all. In fact you now see more English than French in her Lisle Street and Gerrard Street and Old Compton Street restaurants. It is the English who eat there, the French and Italian proprietors who retire with fortunes. In the old days Wardour Street may be said to have been the main artery of Soho, but now her most characteristically French street is Old Compton Street. Here are comestible shops, exactly as in the Rue St. Honoré, and the greatest

profusion of cheap restaurants, most of which soon have their day and disappear. Since the habit of eating away from home has seized London, it has become quite a pursuit to discover new eighteen-penny *tables d'hôte* in this neighbourhood. We now swap catalogues of their merit as we used to swap stories.

Many of Soho's streets retain their old character. Gerrard Street, for example, although the headquarters of telephoning, is yet full of the past. One of the cheap restaurants here is in Edmund Burke's old house; a little farther east, on the same side, at No. 43, is the house where Dryden died: it is now a publisher's office. Both have tablets. At the corner of Gerrard Street and Greek Street, at the Turk's Head, the "Literary Club" which Reynolds founded used to meet. Here also the Artists' Club met; for a hundred and fifty years ago this was the centre of the artists' quarter. Hogarth and Reynolds lived in Leicester Square; Hogarth's painting Academy was in St. Martin's Lane. Reynolds, Wilson, Hayman and Gainsborough met at the Turk's Head with regularity and limited themselves to half a pint of wine apiece. Sir Thomas Lawrence lived in Greek Street, and there Wedgewood had show-rooms.

Frith Street was the early home of Edmund Kean, and Macready had lodgings there in 1816. At No. 6 (a tablet marks the house) William Hazlitt died, in 1830. Charles Lamb stood by his bed. "Well, I've had a happy life," Hazlitt said; but he was bragging. He was buried at St. Anne's, between Dean Street and Wardour Street.

The artists' quarter extended due north beyond Oxford Street to Newman Street and Berners Street. Dean Street was full of artists — Thornhill, Hayman, Hamilton, Bailey, James Ward, all lived there, and Christie's auction rooms were there too. It was Fanny Kelly, Lamb's friend, who

built the Royalty Theatre. In Newman Street lived and died Benjamin West — at No. 14; Stothard at 28. Fanny Kemble was born in this street.

Berners Street is still one of the most sensible streets in London, of a width that modern vestries have not had the wit to imitate. With the Middlesex Hospital at the end it has a very attractive vista. This also was given up to the painters: Fuseli was at No. 13, Opie at No. 8, Henry Bone, whose miniatures we saw at the Wallace Collection, at 15. At No. 7 lived the wretched Fauntleroy, the banker and forger, whom Bernard Barton, the Quaker poet, was urged by a mischievous friend never to emulate. It was upon the lady at No. 54, a Mrs. Tottingham, that Theodore Hook played his dreary "Berners Street hoax," which consisted in sending hundreds of tradesmen to her door at the same hour with articles she had not ordered and did not want, including a hearse. David Roberts, who painted cathedrals like an angel, did not live here, but it was while walking along Berners Street that he received the apoplectic stroke from which he died.

If I do not dally longer in this part of London it is because I do not care much for it. It is a little seamy, and after Berners Street no longer quite the real thing — not old enough on the one hand, or clean enough on the other. Let us look at the old curiosity-shops of Great Portland Street and so pass through the discreet medical district of Harley Street and Welbeck Street to a British institution which it would never do to miss — Madame Tussaud's.

The imposing red façade of Madame Tussaud's in Marylebone Road must give the foreigner a totally false impression of English taste in amusement; for the exhibition does not really bear the intimate relation to the city that its size might lead one to expect. Who goes to

Madame Tussaud's I cannot say. All I know is that whenever I have asked friends and acquaintances of my own (as I have been doing lately) if they have been, they reply in the negative, or date their only visit many years ago. I wonder if men of eminence steal in now and then to see what their effigies are like and what notice they are drawing, as painters are said to lurk in the vicinity of their canvases at the Royal Academy to pick up crumbs of comfort. I wonder if Mr. Kipling has ever seen the demure figure that smirks beneath his name; I wonder if the late Dr. Barnardo really wore, "in the form," as the spiritualists say, a collar such as he wears in his waxen representation? Has Lord Kitchener ever examined the chest which his modeller has given him? Were he to do so he would probably feel as I always do in the presence of the waxen — that they ought to be better. There is hardly a figure in this exhibition that conveys any illusion of life. Their complexions are not right; their hair is not right. Their clothes are obviously the clothes of the inanimate; they have no notion what to do with their hands.

Thinking it over, I have come to the conclusion that not only the unreality, but also the eeriness, almost fearsomeness, of a waxwork, reside principally in its clothes. A naked waxwork, though unpleasant, would not be so bad: it is the clothes wanting life to vivify and justify it that make it so terrible, just as clothes on a corpse add to the horror of death. One wonders where the clothes come from. Do they also, like the features and hair of these figures, approximate to life, or are they chosen at random? Mr. Burns, it is well known, relinquished one of his blue serge suits in exchange for a new one; but the others? Mr. Balfour, for example? Are there under-



JEAN ARNOLFINI AND JEANNE, HIS WIFE

AFTER THE PICTURE BY JAN VAN EYCK IN THE NATIONAL GALLERY

clothes too? Does the Tussaud establishment include a tailor and a modiste? To these questions I could no doubt obtain a satisfactory reply by merely writing to the exhibition; but there are occasions when it is more amusing to remain in the domain of conjecture. This is one.

I wandered into Madame Tussaud's a little while ago entirely for the purpose of saying something about it in this book. As it was a foggy day, I had some difficulty in disentangling the visitors from the effigies; but when I did so I saw that they wore a provincial air. I felt a little provincial myself as I passed from figure to figure and turned to the catalogue to see if I were looking at the late Daniel Leno or Mr. Asquith.

The Chamber of Horrors at Madame Tussaud's is London's Cabaret des Néants, London's Wiertz Museum. Horrors are not encouraged in England, and London has no other official collection of them, if we except the assemblage of articles of crime that Scotland Yard cherishes. But jemmies and pistols and knives are not in themselves horrors, whereas wax decapitated heads dropping blood, coloured pictures of diseases, models of criminals being tortured, a hangman and a condemned man on the scaffold — these exist by virtue of their horrifying power, and you are asked for an extra sixpence frankly as a payment for shudders.

It is all ugly and coarse, and in part very silly, as when you are confronted by a dock crammed with effigies of the more notorious murderers (the only really interesting murderers, of course, being those who have escaped detection or even suspicion: but how should Madame Tussaud's patrons know this?) all blooming with the ruddy tints of health. Seeing them packed together like this for execration, one may reflect, not perhaps wholly without

admiration and certainly with pity, that they are here less because they were wicked than because they dared to anticipate the laggard steps of Fate. One may be a little perplexed too, if one knows anything of history, by the disrepute into which this business of killing a man has fallen. That these poor, shabby, impulsive, ill-balanced creatures should be the only unlicensed shedders of blood that are left! And had Madame Tussaud lived in Iceland in the twelfth century would she have modelled Gunnar of Lithend and Scarphedinn to the same vulgar purposes?

But one must not wholly deprecate. The exhibition as a whole may be supplying a demand that is essentially vulgar: many of its models may be too remote from life to be of any real value: the Chamber of Horrors may be beyond question a sordid and hideous accessory: yet in the other scale must be put some of the work of Madame Tussaud herself — her Voltaire, which is to me one of the most interesting things in London, as his life mask at the Carnavalet is one of the most interesting things in Paris; a few of her other heads belonging to the reign of Terror, notably the Robespierre; the very guillotine that shed so much of France's best and bravest blood; and the relics of Napoleon. We must remember too that it is very easy and very tempting to be more considerate for the feelings of children than is necessary. Children have a beautiful gift of extracting pure gold from baser material without a stain of the alloy remaining upon them; and we are apt to forget this in our adult fulminations against vulgarity and ugliness. For children Madame Tussaud's will always be one of the ante-rooms to the earthly paradise, whether they go or not. The name has a magic that nothing can destroy. And though they should not, if I were taking them, ever set foot in the subterranean Temple of Tur-

pitude, they would, I have very good reason to know, come away from the study of kings and queens of England, and the historical tableaux — the finding of Harold's body, and the burning of the cakes by Alfred the Great, the execution of Mary Queen of Scots and the death of Becket, the signing of Magna Charta and other scenes in *Little Arthur* — with a far more vivid idea of English history and interest in it than any schoolmaster or governess could give them. And that is a great thing.

None the less, not willingly do these footsteps wander that way again; and I would sooner be the chairman of the Society for Psychical Research's committee for the investigation of haunted houses than spend the night among these silent, stony-eyed mockeries of humanity. Surely they move a little at night. Very slowly, I am sure, very cautiously. . . . You would hear the low grinding sound of two glass eyes being painfully brought into focus. . . .

I could go mad in a waxwork exhibition. Once I nearly did. It was in the Edgware Road, and the admission fee was a penny. A small shop and house had been taken and filled with figures, mostly murderers. The place was badly lit, and by the time I had reached the top floor and had run into a poisoner, Mrs. Hogg and Percy Lefroy Mapleton, I was totally unhinged.

CHAPTER XVII

THE PARKS AND THE ZOO

London's Open Spaces — Slumberers — Park Characteristics — The Bulbs — The Marble Arch Theologians — Kensington Gardens — *The Little White Bird* — Regent's Park — The Zoo — Sunday in London — Sally the Chimpanzee — Jumbo — London and Popular Songs — England under Elephantiasis — The Relief of the Adipose — The Seals and Sea-lions — Feeding-time Evolutions — A rival to Man — Lord's — Fragrant Memories — Dorset Square

FOR those who have to get there, London's finest open space — or "lung," as the leader writers say — is Hampstead Heath. But Hampstead Heath is a journey for special occasions: the Parks are at our doors — Hyde Park and Kensington Gardens, St. James's Park and Green Park, Regent's Park and Battersea Park. What London would be like without these tracts of greenery and such minor oases as the gardens of her squares one cannot think. In hot weather she is only just bearable as it is. (Once again I apply the word London to a very limited central area: for as a matter of fact there are scores of square miles of houses and streets in the East End that have no open space near them, Victoria Park having to suffice for an immense and overcrowded district, whereas the West-ender may if he likes walk all the way from Kensington to Westminster under trees.

Each of these parks has its own character; but one sight is common to all, and that is the supine slumberer. Even

immediately after rain, even on a sunny day in February (as I have just witnessed), you will see the London working-man (as we call him) stretched on his back or on his front asleep in every park. I have seen them in the Green Park on a hot day in summer so numerous and still that the place looked like a battle-field after action. Do these men die of rheumatic fever, one wonders, or are the precautions which most of us take against damp superfluous and rather pitifully self-protective?

To come to characteristics, Battersea Park is for games; St. James's Park for water fowl; the Green Park for repose; Hyde Park for fashion and horsemanship; Kensington Gardens for children and toy boats; and Regent's Park for botany and wild beasts. You could put them all into the Bois de Boulogne and lose them, but they are none the worse for that; and in the early spring their bulbs are wonderful. One has to be in London to see how beautifully crocuses can grow among the grass.

I have said that Hyde Park is for fashion and horsemanship; but it is for other things too — for meets of the Four in Hand club (which still exists in spite of petrol): for peacocks: for oratory. Just within the park by the Marble Arch is the battle-ground of the creeds. Here on most afternoons, and certainly on Sundays, you may find husky noisy men trimming God to their own dimensions or denying Him altogether: each surrounded by a little knot of listless inquisitive idlers, who pass from one to another quite impartially. To be articulate being the beginning and end of all Marble Arch orations, the presence of an audience matters little or nothing. Now and then an atheist tackles a neo-Christian speaker, or a Christian tackles an atheist; but nothing comes of it. Such good or amusing things as we have been led to suppose are then

said are (like the retorts of 'bus drivers) mostly the invention of the descriptive humorist in his study.

Unless you want very obvious space, an open sky and straight paths enclosed by iron railings, or unless you want to see fashionable people in carriages or in the saddle, my advice to the visitor to Hyde Park is to walk along the north side until he reaches the Serpentine, follow the east bank of it (among the peacocks) to the bridge, and then cross the bridge and enter Kensington Gardens. In this way he will see the Serpentine at its best, remote from the oarsmen and the old gentlemen who sail toy boats; he will see all the interesting water fowl; and he will have been among trees and away from crowds all the time.

I wonder how many persons have asked themselves where the Serpentine comes from? I happen to know. And what becomes of it? I happen to know that too, the knowledge coming, like all knowledge, either from conversation with someone better informed than oneself, as in my case, or from the printed word, as in yours. The Serpentine comes from the West Bourne, which still flows under Westbourne Grove and William Whiteley's, and entering the park opposite Stanhope Terrace, forms, with artificial assistance, the Serpentine, and runs out at the cascade near Hyde Park Corner, where the rabbits and disgustingly fat pigeons live. Then, travelling under Belgravia, it provides the King with the ornamental water in Buckingham Palace Garden; again plunging underground it emerges as the lake in St. James's Park; and after that it runs into the Thames, and so into the sea.

Personally I would view with composure a veto prohibiting me from all the parks, so long as I might have the freedom of Kensington Gardens. Here one sees the spring come in as surely and sweetly as in any Devonshire lane;



CHRIST WASHING PETER'S FEET

AFTER THE PICTURE BY FORD MADOX BROWN IN THE TATE GALLERY

here the sheep on a hot day have as unmistakable a violet aura as on a Sussex down; here the thrush sings (how he sings!) and the robin; here the daffodils fling back the rays of the sun with all the assurance of Kew; here the hawthorns burst into flower as cheerily as in Kent; here is much shade, and chairs beneath it, and cool grass to walk on. Here also is a pleasant little tea-house where I have had breakfast in June in the open air as if it were France; while in winter the naked branches of the trees have a perfectly unique gift of holding the indigo mist: holding it, and enfolding it, and cherishing it.

Here also are dogs. In all the residential parts of London dogs are very numerous, but Kensington Gardens is the place if you would study them. Ordinary families have one dog only; but the families which use the Gardens have many. There is one old gentleman with eight dachshunds. And the children. . . . But here I refer you to *The Little White Bird*, where you will find not only the law of the Gardens by day, but are let into the secret of Kensington Gardens by night, when the gates are locked, and all is still, and Peter Pan creeps into his cockle-shell boat. . . .

Regent's Park has the Botanical Gardens and the Zoological Gardens to add to its attractions. The Park itself is green and spacious, yet with too few trees to shade it, and too many wealthy private residents like unto moths fretting its garment. The stockbroker who stealthily encloses strips of a Surrey common must have learned his business in Regent's Park. But to anyone who cares for horticulture or wild beasts this is the neighbourhood to live in — in one of the cool white terraces on the park's edge, or thereabouts. When I first came to London I had rooms near by, and every Monday morning I visited the beaver and the wombats and the wallabys — Monday being a sixpenny day.

All that the Zoo needs to perfect it is the throwing open of its doors on Sunday, the one day on which so many Londoners have a chance of visiting it. Open on Sundays it now is, it is true, but only for members and their friends, who, being well-to-do, could go on any other day equally well. London Sabbatarianism breaks down in the summer so completely on the Thames, and in the winter in Queen's Hall, the Sunday League concert rooms, and the chief restaurants, that a few steps more might easily be taken without risk.

There has lately been added to the Zoo a new house for the larger and more horrible human Simian varieties, such as the ourang-outang, the gorilla and the chimpanzee, who if they do not share with us the privilege of an immortal soul have too many other of our attributes to be quite comfortable to watch; but the Zoo has not in this year, 1906, in which I write, any very famous inmates — anything for example, to compare with Sally, the chimpanzee, or Jumbo, the elephant, of whom all frequenters will talk with a regretful shake of the head, as though they would add, "Unfortunate man! How little you know of zoological joy. Those were the days!" — just as elderly gentlemen at Lord's mournfully deprecate modern attempts to bowl and keep wicket — "You should have seen A. G. Steel!" or "Alfred Lyttelton was the man!"

Well, I never saw Sally, and I never saw Jumbo: both were before my London life began; but I can remember reading of Sally's death, and I took some small part at school in singing in a modest and not too tuneful voice that melody which, when Jumbo was sold to Barnum, became for a while our national anthem. For London takes its songs very seriously. One at a time they come, and are studiously done to death — in the streets by organs

and bands and whistling boys and humming men, and at smoking concerts and indoors generally by amateur vocalists. New songs come — to-day usually from America, very saccharine and sickly — steadily one after the other, conquer, and die slowly. Some of their last struggles may be observed on Campden Hill, where organs abound, and are abounding at this very moment as I write: this particular street being (I am very glad to say) not one of those which prohibit cries and music. I know all our regular organs' times and tunes by heart. It is a great moment even to me when a new tune is added; but what must it be to the grinder?

But to return to Jumbo. He was the largest elephant the Zoo had ever owned: I believe the largest elephant known; and when it was decided to part with him to America, a wave of indignation ran over the country. Priceless pictures and autographs are allowed to pass to American collections without a word of protest being raised; but the loss of this mammoth touched the popular imagination. "Strange," says the hymn, "we never miss the music till the sweet-voiced bird has flown." Jumbo had not so wonderfully warm a corner in the national heart while he was accessible, to be a target for buns or a mount for children; but no sooner was his impending departure announced than he became the darling of the day. The papers were full of him; we all, as I said, sang a song about him; a bride sent him some wedding cake; the officials at the Zoo were overwhelmed with presents for him. None the less he went, and shortly after reaching America wandered out of custody on to a railway line, met an express train, and died; the train also being injured. Fat people were not sorry to hear of this calamity, for at that time no one of any conspicuous bulk, whether

at school or on the Stock Exchange, had the good fortune to escape the name of Jumbo, just as a dozen years earlier they had all been called Tichborne. I know not what they are called to-day.

Every frequenter of the Zoo has his favourite animals. Personally I am most interested in the seals and sea-lions. The elephant in England is soon learned; the giraffes, so frail and exotic, I always fear will die before I can get out; monkeys make me uneasy, and lions and tigers, pacing behind their bars, are, however splendid, pathetic figures. But the sea-lions and the seals do not suggest captivity: they frolic while 'tis May, and May is continual with them. But I suppose the best time to see them is half-past three, when they are fed. In their new home, which is a veritable mermaid's pool, with rocks and caverns and real depth of water, they have room for evolutions of delight: and as their keeper is a particularly sympathetic man with a fine dramatic sense, this makes feeding-time a very entertaining quarter of an hour. It is worth making a special effort to be there then, if only to see how one of these nimble creatures can hurl itself out of the water to a rock all in one movement. It is worth being there then to note the astounding and rapturous celerity with which the sea-lions can move in the water — beyond all trains and motor cars — and the grace of them in their properer element.

Seals and sea-lions, it is getting to be well known, are the real aristocrats of the brute creation. One had always heard this; but it is only lately, since troupes of them have been seen on the variety stage, that one has realised it. When an ordinary wet seal from some chilly northern sea — a thing that we kill to keep warm the shoulders of rich men's wives — can balance a billiard cue on its nose with as much intelligence as the superb Cinque-

valli, it is time to wonder if there is not some worthy mental destiny for it more useful in its way than any comforting property of its fur. That most animals can be taught routine, I know; that they can be coached into mechanical feats is a commonplace; but to get one to understand the laws of gravity is a miracle. Not only in a stationary position can this amphibian balance the cue, but move flappingly along the stage with its precarious burden and mount a pedestal. This is very wonderful. And at the Music Hall where I saw this feat other things happened too — displays of humour, well-reasoned games of ball between two sea-lions while their trainer was off the stage, and so forth — which show that it is time for us to revise our notions of these gentle creatures. Here is a potential new force. It is undoubtedly time to clothe our wives in other material, and think of the seal less as a skin than a mind. We might try experiments. Suppose the Lord Chancellor really were a Great Seal. . . .

Perhaps the seal is the superman of the future. In any case it should be the subject of a scientific memoir. When seals and sea-lions come nearer our own vaunted abilities than any other member of the brute creation we are entitled to be told why. "Go to the ant" was never a piece of counsel that aroused me; but "Go to the seal" has logic in it.

When the summer comes it is not, however, Hyde Park with its breadth of sky and its peacocks, not Kensington Gardens with its trees and the Round Pond's argosies, not Regent's Park even at sheep-shearing time, not St. James's Park with its water fowl; it is none of these that call me. My open space then is Lord's cricket ground in St. John's Wood (where acacias and lilac flourish). For the Oval, the great South London ground, where Surrey used to beat all

comers and may do so again, I have never cared: it is not comfortable unless one is a member of the club; it is too big nicely to study the game; there are too many pot-houses around it; and I dislike gasometers. But Lord's I love. There one may sit at ease and watch minutely the best cricket in the world. It was there that, scarlet with shame, I saw the Australian team of 1896 dismissed on a good wicket for 18, one after another falling to Pougher of Leicestershire, who had never puzzled any batsman before, and puzzled none after; it was there that I saw Mr. Webbe bowled by Mordecai Sherwin, who took off the gloves for the purpose, leading to the batsman's famous *mot* that he "felt as if he had been run over by a donkey cart"; it was there that I saw Mr. Stoddart straight drive a ball from the nursery end along the ground so hard that it rebounded forty measured yards from the Pavilion railings; it was there that I saw four distinct hundreds scored in the University match of 1893; it was there that I saw Sir T. C. O'Brien and Mr. A. J. L. Ford heroically pull the Surrey and Middlesex match out of the fire in, I think, the same year. But when Albert Trott at last realised his ambition of hitting the ball clean over the Pavilion I was not there. Perhaps he will do it again: cricket is full of thrills, and what man has done man can do.

I like to approach Lord's through Dorset Square, which was the site of the original ground, because then I feel I may be passing over the exact spot where Alexander, Duke of Hamilton, was standing when he made his great drive — a hit which sent the ball one hundred and thirty-two yards before it touched earth. A stone was erected to commemorate this feat. Where is it now?

CHAPTER XVIII

KENSINGTON AND THE MUSEUMS

Two Burial Grounds — Kensington's Charm — Kensington's Babies — Victorian Influence — Kensington Palace — Holland House — Two Painters — The Model Buildings — The Albert Memorial — Indian Treasures — Machinery for Miles — Heartrending Bargains — A Palace of Applied Art — Raphael's Cartoons — Water Colours — John Constable — The Early British Masters — The Jones Bequest — The Stage and some MSS. — A Perfect One-man Collection — The Natural History Museum

KENSINGTON in itself, no less than in its beautiful name, is the most attractive of the older and contiguous suburbs. The roads to it are the pleasantest in London, whether one goes thither through the greenery of the park and Kensington Gardens, deviously by the Serpentine and among the trees, or by Kensington Gore, south of the Park, or by the Bayswater Road, north of it.

The Bayswater route is the least interesting of the three, save for its two burial grounds — one spreading behind the beautiful little Chapel of the Ascension, which is opened all day for rest and meditation and guards the old cemetery of St. George's, Hanover Square, now no longer used, where may be seen the grave of Laurence Sterne: and the other the garden of the keeper's lodge at Victoria Gate, which is, so far as I know, the only authorised burial ground for dogs, and is crowded with little headstones marking the last resting place of Tiny and Fido, Max and Prince and Teufel.

Kensington is of course no longer what it was; but the old Palace still stands on its eastern side, and Holland House still stands on its western side, and Kensington Square is not much injured on the south, and Aubrey House is as beautiful as ever, on the very summit of the hill, and Cam House and Holly Lodge (where Macaulay died) are untouched, below it. It is true that Church Street, which still has many signs of the past, is to be widened, and that great blocks of flats have risen and are rising — one of them to the obliteration of old Campden House, and that Earl's Terrace and Edwardes Square are to be pulled down and built over in the next few years, and that no doubt all Phillimore Terrace will soon be shops. Yet active as the builder and rebuilder are they have not been allowed to smirch this reserved and truly aristocratic neighbourhood. Notwithstanding all its flats and new houses it still has its composure and is intellectually contented. Kensington knows: you can teach it nothing.

With Edwardes Square, by the way, will vanish perhaps the best specimen of the small genteel square of a hundred years ago that still exists: every house minute, and all cheerful and acquainted with art. It is impossible to avoid the impression as one walks through it that Leigh Hunt once lived here — and as a matter of fact he did!

I said something in an earlier chapter about St. James's Street and Pall Mall and Savile Row being men's streets. Almost equally is the south pavement of Kensington High Street a preserve of women. In fact Kensington is almost wholly populated by women. Not until this year, I am told, was a boy baby ever born there — and he, to emphasise the exception and temper his loneliness, brought a twin brother with him. Why girl babies should so curiously



KENSINGTON PALACE FROM THE GARDENS

outnumber the boy babies of Kensington is a problem which I cannot attempt to solve. The borough has plenty of scientific men in it — from Dr. Francis Galton and Professor Ray Lankester downwards — to make any hazardous conjectures of mine unnecessary; but I would suggest with all deference that the supply of girl babies may be influenced (1) by the necessity of maintaining the feminine character of the High Street, and (2) by fashion, the most illustrious and powerful woman of the last hundred years having been born at Kensington Palace. I rather lean to the second theory, for Kensington being so much under the dominion of the Victorian idea — with the Palace on the edge of it, the amazing souvenir of the queen (a kind of granite candle) in the High Street, her statue in the gardens, and a sight of the Albert Hall and Memorial inevitably on one's way into London or out of it — it is only natural that some deep impression should be conveyed.

Although Kensington Palace began its royal career with William and Mary, and it was Anne who directed Wren to add the beautiful Orangery, the triumph of the building is its association with Victoria. It was there that on May 24, 1819, she was born; and there that she was sleeping when in the small hours of June 20, 1837, the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Lord Chamberlain awakened her to hail her queen — and "I will be good," she said, very prettily, and kept her word. Both these historic rooms — the room where she was born and the room where she slept — you may enter. Her toys you may see too, her dolls' house and her dolls, dear objects to the maternal sightseer, and also her series of amazingly minute official uniforms, together with pictures of herself, her ancestors and children, in great numbers. And from the windows you may look towards London down the long vista over the Round Pond

and across the Serpentine, and see nothing of it at all save Hyde Park Corner, and that only on a very clear day: or looking within, you may see the very beautiful Clock Court-yard of the Palace, which otherwise is invisible to the public.

The Palace is principally Wren's work and is staid and comely save for a top hamper of stone on the south façade which always troubles my eye. But the little old houses north of the main building on the west are quite charming and may be taken as a collyrium. Of the charm of these and many of Kensington's older houses and some of its new I have spoken in the first chapter: although I said nothing there in praise of the Princess Beatrice's stables, which are exquisitely proportioned and always give me a new pleasure.

An even rarer possession of Kensington is Holland House, which stands half way up the hill and may be seen dimly through the trees from the main road and, hiding behind its cedar, more or less intimately through the iron gates in Holland Walk. Holland House is the nearest country mansion to London; while in the country itself are none superior in the picturesque massing of red brick and green copper, and none stored more richly with great memories. It was built in 1607: James the First stayed there in 1612; in 1647 Cromwell and Fairfax walked up and down in the meadow before the house discussing questions of state; William Penn lived there; Addison died there, exhibiting his fortitude *in extremis* to the dissolute Earl of Warwick. At last the house came to Henry Fox, Lord Holland, father of Charles James Fox and grandfather of the famous Lord Holland, the third, who made it a centre of political and literary activity and who now sits in his chair in bronze, under the trees close to the high road, for all the world to see. A statue of Charles James Fox stands nearer the house.

Of the great days of Holland House less than a hundred years ago let the occupant of the neighbouring Holly Lodge tell — in one of his fine flowing urbane periods: — "The time is coming when perhaps a few old men, the last survivors of our generation, will in vain seek amidst new streets and squares and railway stations for the site of that dwelling which was in their youth the favourite resort of wits and beauties, of painters and poets, of scholars, philosophers and statesmen. They will then remember with strange tenderness many objects once familiar to them, the avenue and the terrace, the busts and the paintings, the carving, the grotesque gilding, and the enigmatical mottoes. With peculiar fondness they will recall that venerable chamber in which all the antique gravity of a college library was so singularly blended with all that female grace and wit could devise to embellish a drawing-room. They will recollect, not unmoved, those shelves loaded with the varied learning of many lands and many ages, and those portraits in which were preserved the features of the best and wisest Englishmen of two generations. They will recollect how many men who have guided the politics of Europe, who have moved great assemblies by reason and eloquence, who have put life into bronze and canvas, or who have left to posterity things so written as it shall not willingly let them die, were then mixed with all that was loveliest and gayest in the society of the most splendid of capitals. They will remember the peculiar character which belonged to that circle, in which every talent and accomplishment, every art and science, had its place. They will remember how the last debate was discussed in one corner, and the last comedy of Scribe in another: while Wilkie gazed with modest admiration on Sir Joshua's Baretti, while Mackintosh turned over Thomas Aquinas

to verify a quotation: while Talleyrand related his conversations with Barras at the Luxembourg, or his ride with Lannes over the field of Austerlitz. They will remember, above all, the grace and the kindness, far more admirable than grace, with which the princely hospitality of that ancient mansion was dispensed."

Within Holland House I have never set foot, but I know its gardens — English and Dutch and Japanese — and I know how beautiful they are; and when one is in them how incredible it seems that London is only just across the way, so to speak.

A little west of Holland Park, in Holland Park Road, is Leighton House, the stately home of the late Lord Leighton, which has been made over to the people as a permanent memorial of the artist. Here one may see his Moorish hall and certain personal relics, and some of his very beautiful drawings and water colour sketches of Greece and the southern seas. Exhibitions of pictures are from time to time held here. In Melbury Road, until recently, might be seen on Sunday afternoons a little collection of the paintings of G. F. Watts, but these are now dispersed. In Lisgar Terrace, however, a few minutes farther west, is the Garden Studio of the late Sir Edward Burne-Jones, the friend and contemporary of these artists, where a number of his drawings and paintings are permanently preserved, to be seen on certain days by anyone who presents a visiting-card. Here are the studies for many famous pictures, here are pencil sketches, and a few unfinished works. No modern had so sensitive a pencil as this master, and the Garden Studio should be sought for its drawings alone, apart from its other treasures.

To pass from the true Kensington to South Kensington is to leave silver for gold. South Kensington is all wealth and masonry. Here are houses at a thousand a year and

buildings that assault the heavens. The Albert Memorial is the first of a long chain of ambitious edifices so closely packed together as to suggest that they are models in a show yard and if you have the courage you may order others like them. Albert Memorial, Albert Hall, the Imperial Institute, the Royal College of Music, the Natural History Museum, the School of Science and Art, the Victoria and Albert Museum, Brompton Oratory — these, together with enormous blocks of flats, almost touch each other: a model memorial, a model concert hall, model museums, model flats, model institutes, and so forth. Any pattern copied at the shortest notice. Not that there has been much haste at South Kensington; but what can you expect when the name of the contracting firm has so *dolce far niente* a sound as Holliday and Greenwood?

By the way, the groups of statuary at the four corners of the base of the Albert Memorial, symbolising Europe, Asia, Africa and America, always seem to me very felicitous and attractive. The bison and the cow, the elephant and the camel, are among the kindliest animals that stone ever shaped. I have an artist friend who wishes to treat the Round Pond in a similar spirit, and set up groups to celebrate Grimm and Andersen and Kate Greenaway and Lewis Carroll — since the Round Pond is the children's Mediterranean. A very pretty project it seems to me; too pretty ever to be carried out.

One thinks of the Victoria and Albert Museum as the Museum at the corner of Exhibition Road and the Cromwell Road only: but that is only the Art Museum. The Museum extends into the Imperial Institute, where one may walk for miles, as it seems, among the wonders of the East. I cannot describe these riches: all I can say is that India, China, Japan, Persia, Egypt and Turkey have given

of their best — in pottery and carving, glass and porcelain, embroidery and tapestry, bronze and jade. But nothing is to my imagination more interesting and quickening than the first thing that one sees on entering the east door in Imperial Institute Road — the façade of two houses in teak from Ahmadabad in Gujarat. This is old domestic India at a blow. They are wonderful: nothing else in the exhibition is so unexpected.

One passes on to blue tiles, models of natives, a miniature Juggernaut, the gold throne of Ranjit Singh, precious metal work, blue and purple Palma glass, bold Multan pottery, Damascus ware, Rhodian ware, a blue-tiled fireplace from the palace of Fuyad Pasha at Constantinople, Turkish embroideries and Persian brocades so lovely as to make it ridiculous for new patterns to be devised at all, a praying carpet woven in 1540 for the Mosque at Ardebil, a Chinese flower bowl of blue glass so beautiful that one is dumb before it, a model of a Chinese villa, all gaiety and delight, given by the Sacred Emperor to poor Josephine Beauharnais: netsukés, lacquer and prints. After this we come to science: biology, chemistry, physics, astronomy; which bring us footsore and weary to the east entrance.

We then cross Imperial Institute Road and enter the Southern Galleries and are at once among Frank Buckland's fishes — fishes in spirits and fishes in plaster, live fishes and nets. These are perhaps an acquired taste. Shipping exhibits follow, and we see the Royal State Barge which was built for James I and last used officially on the Thames in 1849. Twenty-one men row it and it is sixty-three feet long. In this room also is a very interesting and beautiful carved brick gateway from the school at Enfield where Keats was educated; and this, with the barge, is the

last human thing we shall see for some miles, the rest being models of machinery.

We then cross Exhibition Road to the Art Museum and prepare for real pleasure once more: for this is one of the most fascinating museums in the world — filled with beauty and humanity. Not a mummy in it, not a South Sea trophy, not a fossil. It is all friendly and all interesting. It is also most shamefully huddled, but the new building will be ready soon and then one will be able to see as a whole many things that now one can examine only part by part. It is South Kensington's mission to instruct England in domestic beauty. Everything that is most beautiful and wonderful in architecture and furniture, sculpture and metal work, jewellery and embroidery, pottery and glass, may here be studied either in the original or in facsimile. The best goldsmith's work in the world is here in electrotype, the best sculpture in casts. The Venus of Milo is here, and the Laocoön, the Elgin Fates, the Marble Faun, Michael Angelo's David: everything famous except the winged victory of Samothrace; I have not found that.

It is of course impossible to write of any museum adequately, even in a whole volume, and I have but a few pages. But this I can say, that there are at South Kensington original works of decorative art — carvings, enamels, lace, pottery, metal vessels, sculpture, glass — before which one can only stand entranced, so beautiful are they. The lace and embroidery alone are worth a long journey. The Della Robbias are worth a longer. The Museum furthermore is made the despair of every collector by the custom — a very interesting one and a very valuable one — but often devastating in its triumph — of appending to every treasure the price that was paid for it. Some are high; but the bargains! The bargains are heart-breaking.

Not the least interesting room is that filled entirely by cases of porcelain and other treasures lent by Mr. George Salting. We have seen some of Mr. Salting's pictures at the National Gallery: here is a further taste of his quality not only as a man of taste and generosity but as an eccentric too. Mr. Salting seems to me one of the most remarkable men now living. He taxes my imagination to the utmost — I am too selfish to understand him. I cannot understand how a man who owns some of the blue china at South Kensington, or, at the National Gallery, Ridolfo del Ghirlandaio's portrait of an old gentleman, can bring himself to live without them. This is what I call Christianity — to forego such joys oneself and invite others to experience them. Mr. Salting's collection of porcelain alone stamps him a master. His one case of snuff bottles has more beauty of colour in it than it falls to the lot of an ordinary man to see in a lifetime.

To name a few things that I particularly remember is a pleasure that I feel entitled to. One comes first to wood carving and furniture, and here one may see a wonderful Mary the Mother of Jesus with Cleophas by Tylman Riemenschneider of Wurzburg; a Virgin and Child in boxwood in the manner of Martin Schongauer; and a Stoning of St. Stephen by Grinling Gibbons: all of which however are transcended in marvellousness by the Crucifixion and Nativity in pear wood by Giovanni and Lucio Otiventono in the Italian Court. Here also are oak dressers, pewter plates, a beautiful lead cistern (£10) and the state chariot of George III. A gallery of stained glass, more furniture and sculpture and musical instruments leads to the Lord President's Court, where goldsmith's work and lace, embroidery and porcelain, ivories and jewels may be seen, and so to the Italian Court, where the Della Robbias and Dona-

tellos and other beautiful reliefs are, and in which one could linger for days.

From here one may go upstairs to the iron work and enamels and the pictures. To the pictures I come later: I would prefer now to retrace our steps on the ground floor to the architectural rooms, where casts of so many beautiful tombs and sculptures may be seen — Michael Angelo's David dominating all. Here also are his Lorenzo de' Medici, his Guiliano de' Medici, his Junius Brutus, his two Slaves, his Moses, his Virgin and Child, and the two lovely *bas-reliefs*, one of which in the original lends glory to our Diploma Gallery. Here also is the cast of the tomb of Beatrice d'Este in the Certosa at Pavia, of the Schreyer monument at Nuremberg, the Ernst monument at Magdeburg, Sir Francis Vere's tomb in the Abbey. I name only a few. No room so badly needs enlarging as does this.

South Kensington, in addition to its own water colour collection and its Raphael cartoons, has had many valuable bequests, chief among them being the Dyce and Forster books, MSS. and pictures, the Sheepshanks collection of British paintings, the Jones bequest, the Ionides bequest, and the Constable sketches given by Miss Isabel Constable. These, with its wonderful Art Library (which is open to the public), its representative water colours, and its collections of etchings and Japanese prints, make it a Mecca of the art student and connoisseur of painting.

When it comes to value I suppose that the Raphael cartoons are worth all the rest of the Museum put together. To me, as I have said, they are finer than anything of his at the National Gallery, and by the possession of them London, for all its dirt, can defy Rome and Florence and Paris. They have the Laocoön and the David and the Venus of Milo: we have the Elgin Marbles,

and Leonardo's "Holy Family," and the Raphael cartoons.

After Raphael it is to South Kensington pre-eminently that one must go to study the history of English water colour painting; but I must confess to some sadness in the proceeding. The transitoriness of water colour has a depressing effect. Standing before a great oil painting of the remote past, a Velasquez, for example, a Rembrandt, or a Leonardo, one thinks only of the picture. But an old water colour painting makes me think of the dead artist. Velasquez might be living now for all the impression of decay that his work brings: but David Cox is beyond question in the grave. To pass from room to room at South Kensington among these fading pictures is to become very gloomy, very tired. Better to look at the work only of one or two men and then pass to something else — Bonington for example. There is no sense of decay about Bonington's water colours. His "Verona" is one of the great things here. Nor is there any sense of decay about William James Müller, another great artist who died young and whose "Eastern Burial Ground" and "Venice" no one should miss. The harvesting scenes of Peter de Wint, a few David Coxes, John Varley's "Moel Hebog," Callow's "Leaning Tower of Bologna" and a view of the South Downs by Copley Fielding — these also stand out in one's memory as great feats. Many Turners are here too, but for Turner's water colours the basement of the National Gallery is the place.

The Constable room is another of South Kensington's unique treasures. I would not say that his best work is here: but he never painted anything, however hurriedly, that had not greatness in it, and some of these sketches are Titanic. It is necessary to visit South Kensington if



HAMPSTEAD HEATH

AFTER THE PICTURE BY JOHN CONSTABLE IN THE SOUTH KENSINGTON MUSEUM

one would know this painter thoroughly — his power over weather, his mileage, his trees and valleys, his clouds and light. There is a little sketch here called "Spring" which I associate in my mind with the "Printemps" of Rousseau at the Thomy-Thierry Collection in the Louvre: they are wholly different, yet each is final. There is a fishing boat here on Brighton Beach which could not be finer. And the many sketches of Dedham Vale (Constable's Fontainebleau) are all wonderful. You may see here his gift of finding beauty where he was. He did not need to travel over land and sea: while other painters were seeking Spain and Italy, Constable was extracting divinity from Hampstead Heath, compelling the Vale of Health to tell him its secret.

The Sheepshanks Collection of works by late Georgian and Victorian painters is interesting for its fine examples of less known masters as well as its famous works. In addition to Turner's "Royal Yacht Squadron at Cowes," a scene of golden splendour, five lovely Wilsons, two spacious and glorious landscapes by Peter de Wint, among the finest landscapes ever painted in England, three excellent Morlands, another divine view of Mousehold Heath by Old Crome, Gainsborough's beautiful "Queen Charlotte," and representative examples of the anecdotal school, Leslie and Webster and Landseer, the collection has an exquisite view of the Thames from Somerset House by Paul Sandby, three very interesting Ibbetsons, a good David Roberts, a Henry Dawson, very Wilsonic, a George Smith of Chichester, two William Collins' and a Joshua Shaw.

The Jones Bequest, which fills a long gallery, is a kind of minor Wallace Collection — pictures, miniatures and furniture, with a florid French tendency. Among the pictures are water colours by Turner and Copley Fielding, two

beautiful Guardis opposite a rather similar Wilson, who in his turn is brought to one's mind by a George Smith of Chichester, a rich autumnal John Linnell, a Reynolds, a Gainsborough, a charming Vanloo — children playing musical instruments — and some interesting Tudor portraits, including Henry VIII, probably by Holbein, and Mary Queen of Scots.

To get the full value of the Dyce and Forster pictures one must be more interested in the history of the stage than I am; but here and there among them is something great with a more general appeal, such as Sir Joshua's portrait of himself. In one of the cases are some very human relics in the shape of the original MSS. of *Dombey and Son*, *Bleak House*, *Oliver Twist* and other of Dickens' novels, including *Edwin Drood*, which is open at the last page as his hand left it on the day he was stricken down to write no more. In another case is a sonnet of Keats, and in a further room Joseph Severn's charcoal drawing of the poet's head, in Rome, just before his death.

Quite recently the nation inherited the very interesting collection of oil paintings, drawings and etchings formed by the late Constantine Alexander Ionides, one of England's wealthy Greek residents. These treasures are now to be seen at South Kensington, where they fill two rooms. A small collection representing the good taste of one humane connoisseur offers perhaps the perfect conditions to the lover of art: and these we have in the Ionides bequest. The paintings are in one room, the drawings and engravings in the other, in the centre of which is a screen wholly given to the burin and needle of Rembrandt of the Rhine, the greatest master that ever forced copper to his will. A visitor to London bent upon the study of Rembrandt's etchings would go naturally to the Print Room of the

British Museum; but they have there no better impressions than some of these that Mr. Ionides brought together. The record of one of the most astonishing achievements in the history of man is unfolded as one turns the pages of this central screen, for, after Shakespeare (who died when the great artist was ten), no human imagination has created so much of human character as Rembrandt of the Rhine. Here we are looking at only a portion of his work — his etchings: but words fail one to put the right epithets even to these. And there remains the work with the brush! Here is a second state of the "Hundred Guelder-piece," "Christ Healing the Sick," and close by it a fourth state of that amazing work "Our Lord Before Pilate": here too in perfect condition are the portraits of gentlemen by a gentleman — the "Young Haaring," the "Ephraim Bonus," the "John Asselyn," the "Burgomaster Jan Six" at his window, and the etcher himself at work with a pencil. Mr. Ionides' interest in etching extended to living masters too — here are Whistler and Legros, Strang and Rodin. Particularly here is Millet, with his "Gleaners," his "Shepherdess Knitting," and other examples of simplicity and sincerity and power. And though the *locus classicus* for Flaxman is University College in Gower Street, the Ionides Flaxmans should be asked for particularly, and also his collection of drawings by Alphonse Legros, one of the most illustrious of our French adopted sons, whose home has been in England for many years, but whose genius is still far too much a matter of the coterie.

The first painting to take the eye as one enters the second Ionides room is Bonington's "Quay" on the screen — an exquisite thing. Of Bonington one can never see too much, and here also is his oil painting of "La Place des Molards, Geneva" injured by its very common gilt

frame. (Like so many of the best pictures, it does not want gilt at all.) On other screens, which are given up to water colours, are drawings by that great master Henri Daumier, too little of whose work is accessible to the English picture lover. There are thirteen in all, of which the "Wayside Railway Station" is perhaps the greatest, and "The Print Collector," which it is amusing to compare with Meissonier's at the Wallace Collection, the most finished. Another fascinating drawing is a sketch of Antwerp by Hervier, a French artist of much accomplishment and charm who is also too little known in England. I mention the oil paintings as they occur in the rather confusing catalogue, where the advantages both of alphabetical and numerical arrangement are equally disdained in favour of a labyrinthine scheme of division into nationalities and sub-divisions into oil and water colour and engravings. Guardi, whom we saw to such advantage at the Wallace Collection, has here a decorative treatment of a fair in the Piazza of St. Mark at Venice (No. 101), with a sky above it of profound blue. One of the most charming of the old Dutch pictures is a landscape by Philip de Koninck (No. 86) which is, I think, the best work by him that I have seen; while of the new Dutch examples there is a beautiful little hay wagon by Matthew Maris (No. 90). The brothers Antoine and Louis Le Nain, of whom very few examples are to be found in England, have two pictures here, very curious and modern when one realises that they are nearly three hundred years old (Nos. 17 and 18). Corot is not quite at his best in either of his two pictures, although both are beautiful, but Courbet's "Immensité" (No. 59) — sea and sand at sunset — is wonderful. Courbet was always great. Diaz' "Baigneuse" (No. 60) is as he alone could have painted



MRS. COLMANN

AFTER THE PICTURE BY ALFRED STEVENS IN THE TATE GALLERY

it, and Georges Michel, another French painter whose appearance on English walls is too infrequent, has a beautiful "Mill" (No. 67) that might have been derived direct from Constable and Linnell, yet is individual too. Millet's great picture here, "The Wood Sawyers" (No. 47), I do not much like: it has the air of being painted to be sold; but the other three are very interesting, especially perhaps the "Landscape" (No. 172) in the manner of Corot. Rousseau's spreading Fontainebleau tree (No. 54) is perhaps the flower of the Barbizon contribution.

The National History Museum is a Museum in the fullest sense of the word: almost everything in it is stuffed. But its interest cannot be exaggerated. Life was never so tactfully, prettily and successfully counterfeited as it is in the galleries on the ground floor, just to the left of the entrance, which contain the cases of British birds with their nests. It needs no learning in ornithology, no scientific taste, to appreciate these beautiful cases, where everything that can be done has been done to ensure realism — even to the sawing down of a tree to obtain a titmouse's nest in one of its branches. Here you may see how sand martins arrange their colonies, and here peep into the nest of the swallows beneath the eaves; but as to whether Mr. Barrie is right in thinking that they build there in order to hear fairy stories, or Hans Andersen is right in holding that their intention is to tell them, the catalogue says nothing. The Museum takes all nature for its province — from whales to humming birds, a case of which occurs charmingly at every turn: from extinct mammoths to gnats, which it enlarges in wax twenty-eight times — to the size of a creature in one of Mr. Wells' terrible books — in order that the student may make no mistake.

Perhaps the most interesting gallery in the whole building is that on the third floor devoted to men and apes, which illustrates not only the Darwinian theory (there is a statue of Darwin on the stairs) but also the indecency of science, for surely it is something worse than bad manners thus to expose the skulls of gentlemen and monkeys. The gentlemen it is true are for the most part foreigners and heathen; but none the less I came away with a disagreeable feeling that the godhead had been tarnished. The most interesting single case in the Museum is perhaps that in the great hall illustrating "Mimicry," where you may see butterflies so like leaves that you do not see them: caterpillars like twigs: and moths like lichen. Between these and the extinct monster, the Diplodocus-Carnegii — which is as long as an excursion train and seems to have been equally compounded of giraffe, elephant and crocodile, all stretched to breaking point — one can acquire, in the Cromwell Road Museum, some faint idea of the resource, ingenuity and insoluble purposes of Nature.

CHAPTER XIX

CHELSEA AND THE RIVER

Beautiful Chelsea — Turner's Last Days — St. Luke's — Church Street — Cheyne Row's Philosopher — The Carlyles and an Intrusion — Don Saltero's — The Publican and the Museum — Rossetti's breakfast — The Physick Garden — The Royal Hospital — The Pensioners' coats — London's disregard of its river — The Gulls — Speed — Whistler and the Thames again — The National Gallery of British Art — "Every picture tells a Story" — Old Favourites — Great English Painters — The New Turners — Watts and Millais — The Chantrey Bequest — A Sea-piece — Lambeth Palace

CHELSEA has not allowed progress to injure it essentially. Although huge blocks of flats have arisen, and Rossetti's house at No. 16 Cheyne Walk has been rebuilt and refaced, and some very strange architectural freaks may be observed in the neighbourhood of No. 73 (fantastic challenges to the good taste of the older houses in the Walk), the Embankment still retains much of its old character and charm. London has no more attractive sight than Cheyne Walk in spring, when the leaves are a tender green and through them you see the grave red bricks and white window frames of these Anne and Georgian houses, as satisfactory and restful as those of the Keizersgracht in Amsterdam.

The Walk has had famous inhabitants. To the far western end (at No. 119) Turner retreated in his old age; and here he lived alone as Mr. Booth, — or, as the neigh-

bours called him, Admiral Booth, deeming him a retired sailor — hoping never to be found by his friends again, and it is here that, huddled in a dressing-gown, he would climb to the roof at day-break to watch the sun rise. And here he died in 1851, aged nearly eighty. Sir Thomas More, whose house stood where Beaufort Row now is — to the west of Battersea Bridge — still lends his name to the neighbourhood; while his body rests in Chelsea Old Church, as St. Luke's is called — a grave solid building of red brick and stone, with a noble square tower on which a sundial and a clock dwell side by side, not perhaps in perfect agreement but certainly in amity. More's wife Joan is also buried here; and here lie the mother of Fletcher the dramatist, and the mother of George Herbert the divine poet, whose funeral sermon was preached in the church by Dr. Donne, and listened to by the biographer both of her son and of her celebrant — Izaak Walton.

Church Street, Chelsea, should be explored by anyone who is interested in quaint small houses, beginning with a fine piece of square Anne work in the shape of a free school that appears now to be deserted and decaying. Swift, Arbuthnot and Atterbury all lived in Church Street for a while.

Cheyne Row, close by on the east, is made famous by the house — No. 5 — in which Carlyle lived from 1834 until 1881, there writing his *French Revolution* and *Frederick the Great*, and there smoking with Tennyson and FitzGerald. Private piety has preserved this house as a place of pilgrimage. It is certainly very interesting to see the double-walled study where the philosopher wrote, and to realise that it was by this kitchen fire that he sat with Tennyson; to look over his books and peer at his pipes and letters and portraits; and yet I had a feeling of in-

discretion the while. If there is any man's wash-hand-stand and bath, any woman's bed and chair, that I feel there is no need for me or the public generally to see, they are Mr. and Mrs. Carlyle's. I seemed to hear both of them distilling suitable epithets. It is not as if one could read the books or examine the letters: everything is under lock and key. There the house is, however, exactly as it was left, and better a thousand times that it should be a show for the curious than that it should be pulled down. And at any rate it contains Carlyle's death mask and a cast of his hands after death — very characteristic hands; and his walking stick is on the wall.

The famous Don Saltero's Museum was at 18 Cheyne Walk. It is now no more; and where are its curiosities? Where? Saltero was one Salter, a barber, who opened a coffee house here in 1695 and relied on his collection of oddities to draw custom. It was a sound device and should be followed. (All innkeepers should display a few curiosities: and indeed a few do. I know of one at Feltham in Sussex, and another in Camden Town; while it was in an East Grinstead hostel that I saw Dr. Johnson's chair from the Essex Head. At Dirty Dick's in Bishopsgate Street are a few ancient relics, and Henekey's, by Gray's Inn, has an old lantern or so. But the innkeeper is not as a rule alive to his opportunities.) At the end of the eighteenth century Don Saltero's collection was dispersed. Chelsea in those days was famous also for its buns and its china. It makes neither now. Why is it that these industries decay? Why is it that one seems to be always too late?

It was at No. 16 Cheyne Walk that Rossetti lived, and it was here that Mr. Meredith was to have joined him, and would have done so but for that dreadful vision, on a bright May morning at noon, of the poet's breakfast — rashers

cold and stiff, and two poached eggs slowly bleeding to death on them. In the garden at the back Rossetti kept his wild beasts. At No. 4 died Daniel Maclise, and, later, George Eliot. Passing the row of wealthy houses of which old Swan House and Clock House are the most desirable, we come to the Botanic Garden of the Royal Society of Apothecaries, with its trim walks and bewigged statue of Sir Hans Sloane in the midst. Here Linnæus himself once strolled; but we cannot do the same, for the Physick Garden, as it used to be called, is private: yet one may peep through its gate in Swan Walk for another view of it — Swan Walk, whose square houses of an earlier day are among the most attractive in London.

Close by, however, are the Royal Hospital's gardens, which are free to all and constitute Chelsea and Pimlico's public park, filled, whenever the sun is out, with children at play. The Hospital itself, which a pleasant tradition ascribes to Nell Gwynn's kindly impulse but history credits to Charles the Second (his one wise deed perhaps), is Wren's most considerable non-ecclesiastical building in London. One would not ask it to be altered in any respect, such dignity and good sense has it; while the subsidiary buildings — officers' quarters and so forth — have charm too, with their satisfying proportions and pretty dormer windows. To be taken round the great hall by an old Irish sergeant is a very interesting experience: past the rows of tables where little groups of veterans, nearly all of them bearded, and all, without exception, smoking, are playing cards or bagatelle or reading, one of them now and then rising to hobble to the fire for a light for his pipe, over their heads hanging the flags won from a hundred battle-fields, and all around the walls portraits of great commanders. It is a noble hall. On the raised

platform at the end is a collection of medals belonging to old Hospitallers who left no kin to claim these trophies, and portraits, among them one of the Iron Duke, who lay here in state after his death, on a table which is still held sacred. In the chapel are more flags. The old soldiers are a more picturesque sight in summer than winter, for in winter their coats are dark blue, but in summer bright scarlet, and these very cheerfully light up the neighbouring streets and the grave precincts of their home.

In an earlier chapter I have said something of Whistler's discovery of the river at Chelsea. Certainly it is here that the urban Thames has most character. By London Bridge it is busier and more important and pretentious; by the Embankment it is more formal and well behaved; but at Chelsea it is at its best: without the fuss and the many bridges of its city course; without the prettiness and flannels of its country course: open, mysterious, and always beautiful with the beauty of gravity.

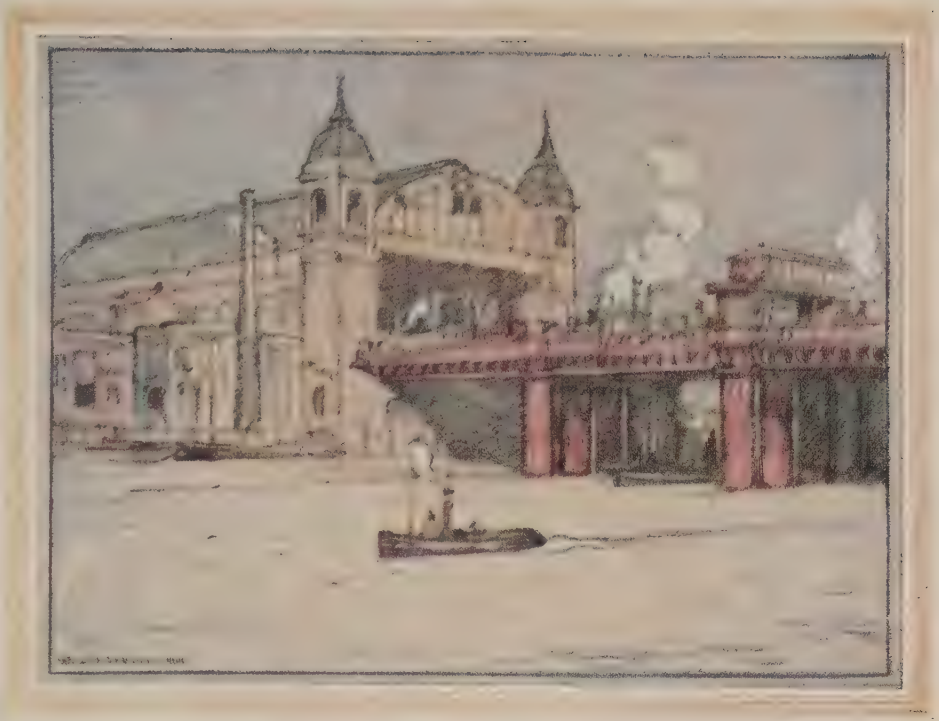
The Thames never seems to me to belong to London as it should. It is in London, but it is not part of London's life. We walk beside it as little as possible; we cross it hurriedly without throwing it more than a glance; we rarely venture on it. London in fact takes the Thames for granted, just as it takes its great men. If it led anywhere it might be more popular; but it does not. It can carry but few people home, and those are in too much of a hurry to use it; nor can it take us to the theatre or the music hall. That is why a service of Thames steamers will never pay. No one fishes in it from the sides, as Parisian idlers fish in the Seine; no one rows on it for pleasure; no one, as I have already said, haunts its banks in the search for old books and prints. Our river is not interesting to us: its Strand, one of our most crowded streets, has

to be a hundred yards inland to become popular. We do not even with any frequency jump into the Thames to end our woes. Living and dying we avoid it.

The only non-utilitarian purpose to which we put the river is to feed the gulls from its bridges. During the past few years the feeding of these strange visitants has become quite a cult, so much so that on Sundays the boys do a roaring trade with penny bags of sprats. There is a fascination in watching these strong wilful birds with the cruel predatory eye and the divinely pure plumage as they swoop and soar, dart and leap, after a crumb or a fish. Every moment more gulls come and more, materialised out of nowhere, until the air just seethes with beating wings and snapping beaks. In summer they find food enough on the seashore: it is only in winter that they come up the Thames in any numbers for London's refuse and charity.

When walking from Chelsea towards Westminster one day in the early spring of this year I saw these gulls at rest. They were on the shore of the Battersea side (somewhere near the spot where Colonel Blood hid in the rushes to shoot Charles II as he bathed)—hundreds strong, beautiful white things against the grey mud. It was a fine afternoon and the sun made their whiteness still more radiant.

While I was standing watching them, and realising how beautiful the Chelsea river is, I was once again struck by the impression of great speed which one can get from river traffic moving at really quite a low rate. A tug came by drawing three or four empty barges. Until this invasion of unrest set in the river had been a perfect calm — not a movement on the surface, nothing but green water and blue sky, and the gulls, and Battersea Park's silent and naked trees. Suddenly this irruption. The tug was



CANNON STREET STATION FROM THE RIVER

making perhaps twelve knots (I have no means of judging) but the effect was of terrific swiftness. She seemed with her attendant barges to flash past. I imagine the narrowness of the river to have something to do with this illusion, because at sea, where a much higher rate is attained, there is no sense of speed at all. (It is true that steamers which were as far apart as the eye could reach a few minutes ago will meet and leave each other in an incredibly short space of time; but the impression then filling the mind is not so much of the speed of the boats as of the mysterious defeat of distance.) And the quality of the speed of this tug boat had nothing of brutality or insolence in it, as a motor car has: it had gaiety, mirth, a kind of cheery impudence. It soothed as well as astonished.

On the same afternoon I was minded to enter the Tate Gallery just to look at Whistler's exquisite nocturne of old Battersea Bridge, which is the perfect adaptation to an English subject of the methods of the Japanese print and conveys the blue mystery of a London night on the river as no other painter has ever done. I have seen all Whistler's work: I have seen his portrait of his mother, and his portrait of Carlyle, and his portrait of Miss Alexander. I have seen his wonderful waves and his decorations for the Peacock Room. I have seen his Princesse de la Pays du Chrysanthème and his Connie Gilchrist; his etchings (the Black Lion Wharf stands before me as I write) and his Songs on Stone; and masterly as it all is, I believe that his London river pictures are his finest work — are the work he was born to do above all other men. In his portraits artifice is visible as well as art; in his best river scenes art conquers artifice.

The Tate Gallery is in forlorn and depressing Pimlico, on the river boundary of that decayed district, just beyond

Vauxhall Bridge, which for so long has been closed, and hard by that yard of ruined ships whose logs warm so many Londoners and whose historic figure-heads thrill so many boys. At the National Gallery of British Art (known familiarly as the Tate Gallery), where the Chantrey Bequest purchases are hung and where many pictures that used to be in Trafalgar Square are now permanently preserved, may be studied Landseer and E. M. Ward, Frith and Leslie, Webster and Mulready, Eastlake and Egg, and all the other nineteenth century masters of technique without temperament, together with a few who had temperament in abundance, such as Constable and Bonington, Rossetti and Alfred Stevens and Burne-Jones. Also Mr. Sargent, who is still in his prime and to whose exquisite "Carnation Lily, Lily, Rose," has recently been added his sumptuous portrait of Ellen Terry.

Those rooms of the Tate Gallery that have been filled from the National Gallery (which relinquished a large portion of its British paintings) are the most important and valuable; for the rest, it is rather as though a procession of old Academies had filed through, three or four pictures dropping out from each and remaining prisoner. If the Tate Gallery has very little painting that can be called great, as one can use the word in the National Gallery, its art is far more homely and companionable than the greatest. Every picture tells a story and puts forth a friendly hand; and that means a deal in England, where we care little for art and much for anecdote and sentiment. What particularly strikes one in the older rooms is the familiarity of the pictures. To come upon Wilkie's "John Knox" and "Parish Beadle," Webster's "Truant," Leslie's "Uncle Toby and the Widow Wadman," Frith's "Derby Day," Landseer's "Peace" and "War" and "Member of the

Humane Society," Walker's "Harbour of Refuge," Rosa Bonheur's "Horse Fair," and Maclise's "Play Scene" in *Hamlet* — to come upon these in the original after having been brought up among engravings of them is to experience a curious and very pleasurable shock. The Tate Gallery undoubtedly will always act as a renewer of youth.

To see certain English painters at their best it is compulsory to visit it. There, for example, hangs Alfred Stevens' portrait of Mrs. Collmann (reproduced opposite page 262), one of the rare portraits by this rare artist. There is Rossetti's "Ecce Ancilla Domini." There is "A Street in Cairo" by William James Müller, who died at thirty-three, and the "Harvest Moon," one of England's few great modern landscapes, by Cecil Lawson, who died at thirty-one, and the beautiful "Varenna Woods" of Frederic Lee Bridell, who died at thirty-two. What these men might have done, who shall say? At the Tate also are priceless works by painters who did reach their prime — Constable, who although represented only by sketches is again seen instantly to be a giant: look at the colour in Nos. 1236 and 1237 in Room I, both views of Hampstead Heath — the colour, and the air, and the light in them, and the mileage too. And in No. 1245 in the same room, the "Church Porch at Bergholt," his native village in Suffolk, note again, as we noted at the National Gallery, the part he played as one of the fathers of the Barbizon School. Here also are John Linnell's "Windmill"; Madox Brown's "Christ washing Peter's Feet" (reproduced opposite page 240) and William Collins' "Prawn Catchers." Bonvin's "Village Green in France," which seems out of place here, serves to remind the visitor how poor London is in French Art.

The Tate has lately acquired a new and wider reputa-

tion, for there have just been added a number of paintings by Turner which for many years lay under dust in the vaults of the National Gallery. By the possession of these pictures, in which occasionally the greatest of all impressionists may be seen almost, if not quite, at his best, and always at his most interesting, the Gallery takes a higher rank than ever before. In one or two — in "The Evening Star" and "Waves breaking on a flat beach" — I think that Turner comes as nigh to pure beauty as in anything of his that I know. I would draw attention also to "Margate from the Sea," and "Hastings," and, studied from the proper distance, the "River Scene with Cattle." Of the extraordinary value of this collection there can be no question; and it is peculiarly interesting to come to it, as I did, direct from Turner's house in Cheyne Walk, where I had been thinking of the old man's last days and his passionate rapture in the rising of the sun over the river. Most of these pictures embody his attempts to translate some of that rapture into paint — once again to celebrate the orb whose light to him was life, religion, all.

To the Tate Gallery one must go also for a full knowledge of the work of George Frederick Watts, our English Titian: for he is represented there by no fewer than twenty-seven pictures — among them such favourites as "Love and Death" and "Love and Life" — which range in subject and treatment from the "Minotaur" (reproduced on the opposite page), so sinister amid such beauty, to the vast "Dray Horses." Millais also may be studied here almost at his best, for here are his "Ophelia" and his "Vale of Rest"; and here also is Burne-Jones' "King Cophetua and the Beggar" in all its wistful loveliness.

Among the Chantrey pictures I would name particularly Mr. Orchardson's "Napoleon on the 'Bellerophon,'" Mr.



THE MINOTAUR

AFTER THE PICTURE BY G. F. WATTS IN THE TATE GALLERY

Arnesby Brown's "Morning," Mr. Shannon's "Flower Girl" and Mr. Adrian Stokes' "Autumn in the Mountains." Vicat Cole's "Pool of London," though there is too much paint in the atmosphere, is a fine thing; and no one should miss among the sculpture the mischief and grace of Mr. Onslow Ford's "Folly." And if the mission of art is to stimulate life at its best, or carry one's thoughts to life at its best, why, there is a picture at the Tate Gallery which perhaps is the finest art of all, for it paints the bravest life bravely. And that is the "Valparaiso" by Thomas Somerscales, a Chantrey purchase, in which a four-master, with every sail set and shining in the sun, ploughs her glorious way through a dark blue sea of indescribable buoyancy and brininess. This is the kind of picture that, were I wealthy enough, I would keep a room for in any house I owned, however I might collect Masters in the others.

And so, following the river at its dreariest along Grosvenor Road, we come to Westminster; but I would like first to cross the suspension bridge and look at Lambeth Palace, secure in its serene antiquity, where the Archbishop of Canterbury lives. This one may do by inquiring for permission by letter to the Primate's chaplain. There is a little early English chapel here, dating from the thirteenth century, which is one of the most beautiful things in London; and the cicerone is full of kindly interest in his visitors, and of a very attractive naïve pleasure, ever being renewed, in his work as the exhibitor. The great names here are Boniface, who built the chapel, Chicheley, who built the tower, Howley, who built the residential portion and did much restoring, and such moderns as Tait and Benson, who beautified where they could. It was Archbishop Tait, for example, who set up the present

windows, which follow in design those which Laud erected or amended, and which the Puritans broke on seeing, as they thought, popery in them. Laud also gave the screen, and from this Palace he went by barge — in the old stately manner of the primates — to his death. It seems to be a point of honour with the archbishops to leave some impress of their own personality on the Palace. Archbishop Benson's window in the little ante-room, or vestry, to the chapel could hardly be more charming; and the inlaid marble floor to the altar with which the present Archbishop's name is associated is a very magnificent addition.

Long rows of Archbishops painted by the best portrait painters of their day — Holbein, Van Dyck, Lely, Hogarth, Reynolds, Romney, Gainsborough — hang on the walls of the dining hall; but the German tourist who was making the tour of the rooms at the time that I was would not look at them. All his eyes were for the Archbishop's silver, and in particular a crumb-scoop in the form of a trowel.

CHAPTER XX AND LAST

WESTMINSTER AND WHITEHALL

Queen Anne's Gate and Mansions — The new Cathedral — The Inverted Footstool — Origins of street names — The Abbey — Writing on the Tombs — The Guides — Henry VII's Chapel — Cromwell's body — Waxworks — A window's vicissitudes — The Houses of Parliament — London's Police — Extinct Humour — London's street wit — Whitehall — Relics of Napoleon and Nelson — The Deadly Maxims — The End

DESPITE the rebuilder Westminster is still very good to wander in, for it has the Abbey and the little old streets behind the Abbey, and St. James's Park, and Queen Anne's Gate, that most beautiful stronghold of eighteenth-century antiquity — while close by it, to emphasise its beauty and good taste, are Queen Anne's Mansions. I always think that one gets a sufficiently raw idea of the human rabbit-warren from the squares of paper and marks of stairs and floors and partitions that are revealed on the walls when a house is in course of demolition: a sight very common in London; but I doubt if the impression of man's minuteness and gregariousness is so vivid as that conveyed by the spectacle of Queen Anne's Mansions by St. James's Park station — surely the ugliest block of buildings out of America, and beyond doubt the most aggressively populous.

Westminster's architectural variety is by no means exhausted in the buildings I have named, for between the Army-and-Navy Stores and Victoria station (which I fancy is Pimlico) is the wonderful new Byzantine Roman

Catholic Cathedral, a gigantic mass of elaborate brickwork which within is now merely the largest barn in England but will one day be lustrous with marble. It is characteristic of London methods that a building so ambitious and remarkable as this should have been packed into an enclosed space from which a sight of it as a whole from any point of view is impossible. Its presence here, in the very heart of flat-land, would be hardly less amazing to the simple intelligence of George III. than was that of the apple within the dumpling. One is conscious that it is vast and domineering and intensely un-English, but of its total effect and of its proportions, whether good or bad, one knows nothing. The lofty tower is of course visible from all points. Sometimes it has mystery and sometimes not, the effect depending upon the amount of it that is disclosed. From Victoria station I have seen it through a slight haze wearing an unearthly magical beauty; and again from another point it has been merely a factory chimney with a desire for sublimity.

Whatever opinion one may hold as to the architectural scheme of the new cathedral, there can be no doubt as to its nobility as sheer building, and no question of the splendid courage behind its dimensions. It appears to me to conquer by vastness alone, and I seem to discern a certain grim humour in these people setting as near their old-time Westminster cathedral as might be this new and flauntingly foreign temple, in which the Abbey and St. Margaret's could both be packed, still leaving interstices to be filled by a padding of city churches.

For one of London's oddest freaks of ecclesiastical architecture you have only to seek Smith Square, just behind the Abbey, and study the church of St. John the Evangelist, the peculiar oddity of which is its four belfries, one at each

corner. I used to be told when I lived within sound of its voice that the shape of this church was due to a passionate kick on the part of the wealthy lady who endowed it, and who, in disgust at the plans submitted by her architect, projected the footstool across the room. "There," said she, pointing to it as it lay upside down, "build it like that"; and the architect did. That is the Westminster legend, and it is probably false — a derivative from the church's shape rather than the cause of it. St. John's, however, has something more interesting to offer than its design, for it was here that the scathing author of *The Rosciad* and other satires — Charles Churchill, who was born close by in Vine Street (now Romney Street) and educated close by at Westminster School — held for a while the position of curate and lecturer, in succession to his gentle old father. Churchill's name is forgotten now, but during the four years in which he blazed it was a menace and a power.

Smith Square still contains two or three of Westminster's true Georgian houses, of which there were so many when I lived in Cowley Street twelve years ago. New roads and new buildings, including the towering pile of offices and flats which the Ecclesiastical Commissioners have just erected, as reckless of the proportions of this neighbourhood as of its traditions, have ruined Westminster. Barton Street still holds out; but for how long? Either Dean's Yard must go soon or the flat-projectors will die of broken hearts.

Barton Street took its name from Barton Booth, the actor, who invested his savings in property at Westminster. Cowley Street is named after Barton's native village in Middlesex, and has no association with Cowley the poet, athough when I lived there I used to be told that it was

from him that it took its style. Such is oral tradition! There is indeed no need to invent any origin for London's street names: their real origin is interesting enough. Why Mount Street? Because Oliver's Mount, a point in the fortification lines round London made by the Parliamentarians in 1643, stood here. Why Golden Square? Because in the neighbourhood was an inn called "The Gelding," which gave its name to the square and was then modified by the inhabitants because they did not like it. Why Hay Hill? Because the Aye or Eye brook once ran there: hence also the two Brook Streets. But the local tradition probably involves a load of dried grass. Why Westbourne Grove? Because of the West Bourne, another stream, now flowing underground into the Serpentine.

Why Covent Garden? Because it was the garden, not for the sale but for the culture of vegetables, belonging to the Convent: that is, the Abbey of Westminster. Why Chelsea? Because the river used to cast up a "chesel" of sand and pebbles. Selsey in Sussex is the same word. Why Cheapside? Because at the east end of it was a market place called Cheaping. Why the Hummums? Merely a Londonisation of Hammam, or Turkish Bath, which it was before it became a hotel. Why the Isle of Dogs? Because when Greenwich was a royal resort the kennels were here. Why the Strand? Because it was on the shore of the Thames. Why Bayswater? Because one of William the Conqueror's officers, Bainardus of Normandy, became possessed of the land hereabout (as of Baynard's Castle in Sussex) and one of his fields at Paddington was called Baynard's Water or Watering. Why Pall Mall? Because the old game of Pall Mall was played there. Why Birdcage Walk? Because Charles II had an aviary there. Why Storey's Gate? Because Edward Storey,

keeper of the aviary, lived hard by. Why Millbank? Because a water mill stood where St. Peter's wharf now is turned by the stream that ran through the Abbey orchard (the Abbey orchard!) down Great College Street. This was one of the streams that made Thorney Island, on which Westminster Abbey and the Houses of Parliament stand. It is an island no longer, because the streams which divided it from the main land have been dammed and built over; but an island it was, its enisling waters being the Mill Bank stream, the Thames, a brook which ran down Gardiner's Lane, and, on the east, the Long Ditch in Prince's Street. Why was Westminster so called? Because St. Paul's was the parent and the Abbey was its western dependency — the west minster.

And here, by way of Dean's Yard, we enter the Abbey, which really needs a volume to itself. Indeed the more I think about it the more reluctant my pen is to behave at all. An old children's book which I happen to have been glancing at this morning, called *Instructive Rambles in London and the adjacent Villages*, 1800, puts the case in a nutshell. "On entering the Abbey the grandeur and solemnity of the whole struck them forcibly; and Charles, addressing his father, said, 'By the little I already see, sir, I should think that instead of a single morning it would take many days, nay even weeks, to explore and examine into all the curious antiquities of this building.'" His father agreed with him, and so do I. Equally true is it that it would take many weeks to record one's impressions. To say nothing would perhaps be better: merely to remark "And here we enter the Abbey" and pass on. But I must, I think, say a little.

So much has it been restored, and so crowded is it (to the exclusion of long views), that one may say that the

interest of the more public part of the Abbey resides rather in its associations with the dead than in its architecture. To see it as a thing of beauty one must go east of the altar — to the exquisite chapel of Henry VII. The Abbey proper has nothing to show so beautiful as this, grave and vast and impressive as it is; but even with this its real wonderfulness comes from its dead. For if we except the great soldiers and sailors and painters who lie at St. Paul's, and the great poet at Stratford on Avon, almost all that is most august and illustrious in English history and literature reposes here.

Entering by the north transept you come instantly upon the great statesmen, the monument to Chatham, at first only a white blur in the dim religious light, being so close to the door. Palmerston, Canning and Gladstone are near by. The younger Pitt and Fox lie here too, but their monuments are in the north aisle of the nave. We have seen so many of Fox's London residences: this is the last. Beneath the north aisle of the nave lie also men of science — Newton and Darwin and Herschel. In the south aisle of the nave are various generals and governors, Kneller, the painter, Isaac Watts, who wrote the hymns, John and Charles Wesley, Major André and David Livingstone. Poets' Corner, which is a portion of the south transept, loses something of its impressiveness by being such a huddle and also by reason of certain trespassers there: a fault due to lax standards of taste in the past. Had it been realised that the space of Westminster Abbey was limited, the right of burial there would long ago have been recognised as too high an honour to be given indiscriminately to all to whom the label of poet was applied. We now use the word with more care. The Rev. William Mason and Nicholas Rowe, John Phillips and St. Evremond, even



WESTMINSTER ABBEY

Gay and Prior, strike one in the light of interlopers. Only by dying when they did could they have found their way hither. And certain of the monuments are far too large, particularly that to John, Duke of Argyll and Greenwich, by the exuberant Roubilliac, — no matter how Canova may have admired it. The plain slabs that cover Johnson and Dickens, Browning and Tennyson, are more to one's liking; or such simple medallions as that to Jenny Lind. Shakespeare and Milton are only commemorated here; but Chaucer and Spenser, Jonson ("O rare Ben Jonson" runs his epitaph) and Dryden, Gray and Cowley — all these and many others lie at Westminster.

So far all has been free; but the choir is not free, and you must be conducted there officially. The Abbey guides are good and not impatient men, with quite enough history for ordinary purposes and an amusing pride in their powers of elocution. They lead their little flock from chapel to chapel, like shepherds in the East, treading as familiarly among the dust of kings as if it were the open street.

The first chapel, St. Benedict's, has only one queen, and she a poor unhappy slighted creature — Anne of Cleves; the second chapel, St. Edmund's, has but one also, Anne's sister queen Jane Seymour. Yet here lie many noble bodies beneath tombs of great interest, notably the Earl and Countess of Shrewsbury in the middle; and Eleanor de Bohun beneath a fine brass; and the little sister and brother of the Black Prince, with tiny alabaster figures of themselves atop, who died as long ago as 1340. Here also, a modern among these medievalists, lies the author of *Zanoni* and *My Novel*. A crusader by the doorway testifies to the old laxity of rules regarding visitors, for he is cut all over with names and initials and dates — just as the backs of the figures in the Laocoön group beneath the Vati-

can are scribbled by Italian sightseers. How many persons know who it was that first scratched his initials on an Abbey tomb? Of all men, Izaak Walton, who cut his monogram on Casaubon's stone in the south transept in 1658.

The next chapel, St. Nicholas's, is the burial place of the Percys, a family which still has the right to lie here. Here also are the parents of the great Duke of Buckingham, in marble on the lid of their tomb, and in dust below it; and here lies the great Burleigh. Both this chapel and that of St. Edmund call for coloured glass.

We come now to the south aisle of Henry VII's chapel and get a foretaste of the glories of that shrine. A very piteous queen lies here, Mary Queen of Scots, brought hither from Peterboro' by her son James I, and placed within this tomb. Charles the Second lies here also, and William and Mary and Anne and General Monk, and here is a beautiful bronze of the mother of Henry VII. In the north aisle is dust still more august, for here is the tomb of Elizabeth, erected by James I with splendid impartiality. Queen Mary lies here too, but the guide is himself more interested, and takes care that you are more interested, in the marble cradle containing the marble figure of her sister, the little Sophia, the three-day-old daughter of James I; in the tomb of the little Lady Mary; and in the casket containing the remains of the murdered princes, brought hither from the Tower. A slab in the floor marks the grave of Joseph Addison, the creator of Sir Roger de Coverley, who wrote in the *Spectator* a passage on the Abbey and its mighty dead which should be in everyone's mind as they pass from chapel to chapel of this wonderful choir, and which I therefore quote. "When I look upon the tombs of the great, every emotion of envy dies in me: when I read the epitaphs of the beautiful,

every inordinate desire goes out: when I meet with the grief of parents upon a tombstone, my heart melts with compassion: when I see the tombs of the parents themselves, I consider the vanity of grieving for those whom we must quickly follow: when I see kings lying by those who deposed them, when I consider rival wits placed side by side, or the holy men who divided the world with their contests and disputes, I reflect with sorrow and astonishment on the little competitions, factions, and debates of mankind."

And so we come to the Abbey's most beautiful part — Henry VII's chapel, which is London's Sainte Chapelle. It is perhaps the most beautiful chapel in England, and beyond question the most wonderful, since not only is it an architectural jewel but it holds the dust of some of our greatest monarchs. If Henry VII had done nothing else he would live by this. Woodwork and stonework are alike marvellous, but the ceiling is the extraordinary thing — as light almost as lace, and as delicate. Not the least beautiful things here are the two stone pillars supporting the altar above the grave of Edward VI. Henry VII's tomb is in the chantry at the back of the altar, and in the same vault lies James I. George II and the Guelphs who are buried here have no monuments, but the blackguard Duke of Buckingham whom Fenton stabbed is celebrated by one of the most ambitious tombs in the Abbey, with every circumstance of artificial glory and a row of children to pray for him and women to weep. The Duke of Richmond, another friend of James I, is hardly less floridly commemorated — close to the plain stone that covers Dean Stanley.

A slab in the next chapel or bay marks the grave where Cromwell lay. After the Restoration, however, when the country entered upon a new age of gold under Charles II,

one of the first duties of the Londoner was to remove the Protector's body and treat it as of course it so richly deserved. It was therefore decapitated: the trunk was thrown into a pit at Tyburn and the head was set up on Westminster Hall so firmly that it was more than twenty years before it fell during a high wind. Charles the Second having reigned quite long enough, it was perhaps felt that justice had been done; so the skull was not returned to its pinnacle but allowed to pass into reverent keeping. Cromwell's statue may now be seen, with a lion at his feet, in the shadow of Westminster Hall. The wheel has come full circle: he is there.

Compared with the chapel of Edward the Confessor behind the high altar, to which we now come, that of Henry VII is in age a mere child. Here we pass at once to the thirteenth century, Edward I being the ruling spirit. His tomb is here — the largest and plainest in the Abbey — and here lies his wife Eleanor, for whom the Crosses were built — one of the prettiest thoughts that a King ever had — a cross at every place where her body rested on its way from the North to London, Charing's Cross being the last. Edward the Confessor lies in the shrine in the midst: Henry V in that to the north of it, and preserved above are the saddle, the sword and helmet that he used at Agincourt. But popular interest in this chapel centres in the coronation chair that is kept here, in which every king and queen has sat since Edward I.

We come lastly to the chapel of St. John the Evangelist, crowded with tombs, of which by far the most beautiful, and in some ways the most beautiful in the Abbey, is that of Sir Francis Vere, copied from Michael Angelo: four warriors holding a slab on which are the dead knight's accoutrements. A cast of this tomb is in South Ken-

sington. The guide, however, draws attention rather to Roubilliac's masterpiece — in which Death, emerging from a vault, thrusts a dart at Mrs. Nightingale, while Mr. Nightingale interposes to prevent the catastrophe. At Père la Chaise this would seem exceedingly happy and appropriate; but it suits not our austere Valhalla. Hidden away behind the great tomb of Lord Norris are statues of John Philip Kemble and his illustrious sister Mrs. Siddons.

With the possible exception of the Voltaire and one or two of the heads from the Reign of Terror, there is nothing at Madame Tussaud's so interesting as the waxworks belonging to the Dean and Chapter of Westminster, hidden away up a winding stair over the next chapel — Abbot Islip's. These one should certainly make an effort to see, for they are very quaint and they probably approximate very closely to life. The Charles the Second one can believe in absolutely, and Elizabeth too. Nelson ought not to be there at all, since he was buried at St. Paul's and these figures were originally made to rest upon the Abbey graves until the permanent memorial was ready; but all the sightseers being diverted from Westminster to St. Paul's, after Nelson's funeral, the wise Minor Canons and lay vicars (who took the waxwork profits) set up a rival Nelson of their own. It is a beautiful figure anyway.

In the cloisters, which to my mind are more alluring to wander in than the Abbey itself, are other tombs, for never were the dead so packed as they are here. Among those that lie here, chiefly clerical, are a few Thespians: Foote and Betterton and Mrs. Bracegirdle and Aphra Behn, and here lies Milton's friend who wrote a sweet book of airs, Mr. Henry Lawes, and the prettiest of short epitaphs is here too: "Jane Lister, dear childe, 1688." The cloisters lead to the ancient Chapter House, an octagonal room

dating from the thirteenth century, which once was all the Parliament house England had, and to the Chamber of the Pyx, where the royal jewels were kept before they went to the Tower; and from the cloisters you gain the residences of the Canons of the Abbey, where all live in the odour and harmony of sanctity. The Deanery hides round the corner to the left as you enter from Dean's Yard, from which you also gain Westminster School, where Ben Jonson and George Herbert, Dryden and Prior, Sir Christopher Wren and Gibbon, Warren Hastings and Cowper, were educated — the only historic public school left in London.

St. Margaret's, the little church under the shadow of the Abbey, like its infant child, must be visited for one of the finest windows in England, so rich and grave — a window with a very curious history. It was given by the magistrates of Dordrecht to Henry VII for his Chapel in the Abbey, but as he died before it could be erected, Henry VIII presented it to Waltham Abbey, little thinking how soon he was going to dissolve that establishment. The last Abbot transferred it to New Hall in Essex, which passed through many hands — Sir Thomas Boleyn's, Queen Elizabeth's, the Earl of Sussex's, the great Duke of Buckingham's, Oliver Cromwell's and General Monk's. It was during General Monk's ownership of New Hall that the window was taken from its place and buried in the ground for fear it should be broken by Roundheads, who had a special grudge against glass and the noses of stone saints. It was disinterred when all was safe, but did not reach St. Margaret's until 1758. In this church Sir Walter Raleigh is buried, and here was married Samuel Pepys and (for the second time) John Milton. Latimer preached Lenten sermons here before Edward VI; and it was in the churchyard that Cowper, a boy at Westminster School, was standing when a sexton digging a grave threw



THE VICTORIA TOWER, HOUSE OF LORDS

out a skull which hit him on the leg and began that alarm of his conscience which the sinister eloquence of John Newton was to maintain with such dire results.

Of the Houses of Parliament I find myself with nothing to say. They are, I often think, beautiful; and then I wonder if they are, or are merely clever. Certainly if the Victoria Tower is the right size the Clock Tower is too slender. The best view is from the Embankment walk by St. Thomas's hospital: seen across the water the long low line of delicate stone is very happy and the central spire could not be more charming. And yet should there be so much ornament, so much daintiness? Should not our senate, should not our law courts, be plain honest buildings innocent of fantastic masonry and architectural whimsies? Somerset House, Hampton Court, Chelsea Hospital, St. James's Palace, the old Admiralty — should we not adhere to their simplicity, their directness? Yet the Houses of Parliament lighted up make a fascinating picture postcard for the young.

Years ago, when I lived in Cowley Street and still reverenced men and senators, I used on my way home at night to loiter a little in Parliament Square in the hope of seeing the demigods whom our caricaturists had made it so easy to recognise: Sir William Harcourt with a thousand chins; Mr. Gladstone submerged in his collar; Mr. Bowles with his wooden legs and iron hooks. Those were great days, when a Member of Parliament was something exalted and awful. But now all is changed. I am older and the House is transformed. Members of Parliament are three a penny, and knowing quite a number personally I loiter in Parliament Square no more.

The whole British Empire is administered between Parliament Square and Trafalgar Square. With the exception

of the War Office (which is in Pall Mall) all the Government offices are here; and whatever Parliament may be doing, their work goes on just the same.

New Scotland Yard is here too: on the right, a huge square red building which was planned for an opera house, abandoned when its foundations were all built, and then was bought by the Government for a central police station. (The other new opera house which was erected in London in recent times is now a music hall.) Having need for larger premises, the authorities have just built a second block, which is joined to the parent edifice by one of the most massive bridges in London — a very fine arch indeed, as impressive as the little Venetian flying passage between the Grand Hotel and its annex at Charing Cross is delicate and fanciful.

Without its police London could not be London. They are as much landmarks as its public buildings, and are almost as permanent and venerable. The Londoner has a deep respect for his police, and not a little fear too; it is only on the Music Hall stage that they are ridiculed. A policeman on duty is often assaulted in a rage, but he is never made fun of. Probably no public servant so quickly assumes dignity and importance. I suppose that before they are policemen they are ordinary, impulsive, even foolish country youths of large stature (the only London policeman I ever knew in the chrysalis stage was a high-spirited fast bowler); but instantly the uniform and the boots are donned they become wise and staid, deliberate and solid, breathing law and order. It is one of the best examples of the triumph of clothes. I am not sure but that a policeman's helmet is not a better symbol of London than the dome of St. Paul's: they are indeed rather similar.

The policeman as a preserver of order is less noticeable in

London than as a friend, a counsellor, a preserver of the amenities. He regulates the traffic, and from his glove there is no appeal. He takes old ladies and nursemaids across the road, he writes in his book the particulars of collisions, he conveys the victims of motor cars to the hospital, he tells strangers the way to the Abbey. The London policeman is indeed the best friend of the foreigner and the provincial. They need never be at a loss if a policeman is in sight, and they will not do amiss if they address him as "Inspector."

London, as I have said, fears its policemen. Drink now and then brings a man into open defiance, and on Boat Race night the young barbarians of Oxford and Cambridge import into the West End a certain exuberance foreign to this grey city; but for the most part the policeman's life is uneventful, and his authority is unchallenged. The practical joker who used to overturn the Charleys in their boxes (that thin and tedious jest) is extinct. We have no high spirits any more: they have gone out, they are not good form. Theodore Hook, who stands for the highest of all, would die of ennui could he visit again glimpses of a London moon: Theodore Hook, some of whose "ordinary habits," I read in a work on the London of his day, "were to hang pieces of meat on the bell-handles of suburban villas, in the evening, so that during the night every stray dog that happened to pass would give a tug; by this means the bell would be set ringing five times an hour to the consternation of the family, who, with candles in hand, might in vain search the garden, or peep into the road for the cause. He would cut signboards in half, and affix the odd pieces to each other, so that the signboard owners next day would have the pleasure of witnessing their various occupations interpreted by the most ridiculous announce-

ments in the world. He would stitch his friend's clothes up in such a fashion that when, on the following morning, the friend got into them, the conclusion that he would at once jump to was that he had from some extraordinary and unaccountable cause become fearfully swelled during the night — a conclusion which Hook would take care to confirm by expressing his great concern at his friend's appearance, and entreating him to be allowed to call a doctor."

These were some of his "ordinary habits." What a man! He would also "carry a Highlander from a tobacconist's shop, after dark, and stagger with it towards a cab, in which he would deposit the painted figure, giving the cabman the address perhaps of some influential person, and bidding him drive carefully as the gentleman inside was a nobleman slightly intoxicated." But this kind of ebullient Londoner is quite extinct, as I have said, and I suppose that it is that kill-joy the policeman who has made him so. The police have come in since Hook's time: perhaps he made them imperative. Nothing can so dispirit a practical joker as the large firm hand of the law. The law may to some extent have become a respecter of persons, but it still has no nose for a joke. The law refers all jokers to the scrutiny of the police station, which brings to bear upon them a want of sympathy more than Caledonian.

London can still produce the wag in great numbers, but his efforts are entirely verbal and are too little his own. It is the habit to extol the street wit of London; but with the best wish in the world, I for one have heard very little of it. For the most part it consists in repeating with or without timeliness some catchword or phrase of the Music Halls. It is customary to credit 'bus drivers with an apt and ready tongue; but my experience is that their retorts are either old or pointless. Show me a 'bus driver and I

will show you a man who is not witty. If he were he would not be a 'bus driver.

The drivers of London all dip into the same long-filled reservoir of sarcasm, from which no new draught has emerged these fifty years. But tradition has made the 'bus driver witty, just as it made the late Herbert Campbell funny; and it will persist.

As noticeable as the London driver's want of real wit is his want of freemasonry. Every driver's hand is turned against every other. No policy of vexatiousness is too petty for one to put in practice against another: they "bore," they impede, they mock, they abuse each other; while owing to the laxity of police supervision, the narrowness of every London street is emphasised by the selfishness with which the middle of the road is kept. It ought to be compulsory for all slow-moving vehicles — all that do not want to pass others — to hug the near kerb. As it is, they crawl along very near the middle and reduce the width of the roadway by nearly half.

To return for a moment to the police, if you would know them at their most charming you must leave an umbrella in a cab and then go to Scotland Yard to recover it; for the men who have charge of this department (which is the nearest thing to the Paris Morgue that London possesses) are models of humorous urbanity. Surrounded for ever by dead umbrellas, harassed day by day by the questions of a thousand urgent incoherent ladies, they are still composed and grave and polite. A visit to the adjoining office for lost miscellaneous property will convince one in a moment that there is nothing that human beings are unable to leave behind them in a London cab.

The old Palace of Whitehall consists now only of the great banqueting hall from which Charles I walked to the

scaffold on the tragic morning of January 30, 1649. It was through the second window from the north end, and the scaffold was built out into the street: old prints commemorate the event — the shameful event, may I never cease to think it. There is one such print in the hall itself, in the same case with the king's beautiful silk vest that he wore on the fatal day.

Whitehall now contains some of the most interesting relics in the world; but it is a Museum whose interest is now and then almost too poignant. I, for one, simply cannot look with composure at the Napoleon relics from Longwood, least of all at the chair in which he always sat. The mere thought of that caged eagle at St. Helena is almost more than one can bear: and these little intimate tokens of his captivity are too much. Yet for stronger eyes there they are at Whitehall, including the skeleton of his favourite horse Marengo.

Here also are relics of Nelson — the last letter he wrote to his dearest Emma, in his nervous modern hand, just before Trafalgar, expressing the wish soon to be happy with her again; the clothes he used to wear; his purse; a portion of the Union Jack that covered him on the *Victory*, for pieces of which his sailors fought among each other; the telescope he put to his blind eye; the sword he was using when his arm was wounded; the mast of the *Victory*, with a cannon ball through it; and a hundred other souvenirs of England's most fascinating hero, the contemplation of which is lifted by the magic of his personality, the sweetness and frailty of it, above vulgar curiosity.

To pass from Nelson to Wellington is like exchanging summer for winter: poetry for prose: romance for science; yet it must be done. Here among other things is Wellington's umbrella, the venerable Paul Pry gamp which he



HOLY FAMILY

AFTER THE DRAWING BY LEONARDO DA VINCI IN THE DIPLOMA GALLERY, BURLINGTON HOUSE

carried in his political days in London, even as Premier, and which is as full of character as anything of his that I ever saw, and wears no incongruous air amid such tokens of his military life as the flags around the gallery which he captured from the French. No one really knows the Iron Duke until he has seen this umbrella. Such an umbrella! If one were confronted with it as a stranger and asked to name its owner, Wellington would be the last man one would think of; yet directly one is told it was Wellington's, one says, "Whose else could it be? Wellington's. Of course."

Among other treasures in this Museum are the jaws of famous or infamous sharks, one of which was thirty-seven feet long; wonderful models of boats made under difficulties by French prisoners out of mutton bones and such unlikely material — the French prisoners vying always with the patient Chinese carver of cherry stones for the championship of the world in ingenuity; Cromwell's sword; Drake's snuff-box and walking stick; relics of Sir John Moore; relics of Sir John Franklin; relics of Collingwood; a model of the first battleship to carry guns, the prettiest, gayest, most ingratiating junk of a boat, which put to sea to guard our shores in 1486; two bottles of port from the *Royal George*, no doubt intended for the delectation of the brave Kempenfeldt; and very interesting plans of the battles of Trafalgar and Waterloo. All these and many other objects are displayed with much pride and not a little simple eloquence by an old soldier — for there is no catalogue. Certainly there is in London no more interesting room than this: not only for its history but its present possessions.

Beneath, in the vaults, is a museum of artillery. Old guns and modern guns, naval guns and field guns, models of forts, shells and grenades, and all the paraphernalia of licensed killing may be studied here under the guidance

of another old soldier, whose interest in his work never flags, and who shows you with much gusto how to work a Maxim gun which fires 670 rounds a minute, and at 2000 yards can be kept playing backwards and forwards on a line of men four hundred yards long. "Acts like a mowing machine," says the smiling custodian. "Beautiful! Cuts 'em down like grass. Goes through three at once sometimes, one behind the other." It was with the unique and perplexing capabilities of this machine, perfected A.D. 1904, in my mind, that I emerged into Whitehall again, and was conscious instantly on the other side of the way of the Horse Guard sentries, each motionless on his steed. "I know what's in store for you," I thought to myself. "Cuts 'em down like grass. . . . Goes through three at once sometimes." Such things make it almost a work of supererogation to be born: reduce a mother's pangs to a travesty; at least when she is the mother of a soldier. How odd it all is! — Nature on the one hand building us up so patiently, so exquisitely, cell on cell, and on the other Sir Hiram Maxim arranging for his bullets to go through three at once! It is too complicated for me. I give it up.

And so, through the obvious and comparatively unperplexing traffic of Whitehall, we come to Charing Cross again and to the end of these rambles, not because there is no more to say (for I have hardly begun yet) but because one must not go on too long. As a Londoner of Londoners, whose knowledge of the town, it has been put on record, was extensive and peculiar — far more so than mine will ever be — once remarked, the art of writing a letter is to leave off at such a point as will "make them wish there was more." And when one is writing a book one would like to do the same.

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